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NME

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

Six quid an album anyone?

Shock Thrills Report p.11

THE CRAMPS get mysterioso/Pic: JILL FURMANOVSKY

THE CRAMPS

Rock & Roll Werewolves From The Black Lagoon By NICK KENT p36-38

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

CHARTS

Week ending June 23, 1979

uk singles

This Week				Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	**Ring My Bell**	Anita Ward (TK)	4	1
2	(3)	**Dance Away**	Roxy Music (Polydor)	6	1
3	(4)	**Boogie Wonderland**	Earth, Wind & Fire with The Emotions (CBS)	6	3
4	(2)	**Sunday Girl**	Blondie (Chrysalis)	5	1
5	(11)	**Are Friends Electric**	Tubeway Army (Beggars Banquet)	4	5
6	(8)	**Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now**	McFadden & Whitehead (Philadelphia)	5	6
7	(6)	**Shine A Little Love**	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	5	6
8	(12)	**We Are Family**	Sister Sledge (Atlantic)	3	8
9	(5)	**Theme From The Deerhunter**	Shadows (EMI)	6	5
10	(14)	**Up The Junction**	Squeeze (A&M)	2	10
11	(15)	**H.A.P.P.Y. Radio**	Edwin Starr (RCA)	4	11
12	(24)	**The Lone Ranger**	Quantum Jump (Electric)	3	12
13	(18)	**Masquerade**	Skids (Virgin)	4	13
14	(23)	**Who Were You With In The Moonlight**	Dollar (Carrere)	3	14
15	(13)	**Hot Stuff**	Donna Summer (Casablanca)	5	13
16	(7)	**Reunited**	Peaches & Herb (Polydor)	8	3
17	(9)	**Boys Keep Singin'**	David Bowie (RCA)	7	8
18	(25)	**Night Owl**	Gerry Rafferty (United Artists)	2	18
19	(26)	**Gertcha**	Chas & Dave (EMI)	4	19
20	(—)	**Living On The Front Line**	Eddy Grant (Ice Ensign)	1	20
21	(20)	**The Number One Song In Heaven**	Sparks (Virgin)	5	17
22	(—)	**Go West**	Village People (Mercury)	1	22
23	(—)	**Say When**	Lene Lovich (Stiff)	1	23
24	(19)	**Bright Eyes**	Art Garfunkel (CBS)	13	1
25	(—)	**Light My Fire/137 Disco Heaven**	Amii Stewart (Atlantic/Hansa)	1	25
26	(—)	**Space Bass**	Slick (Fantasy)	1	26
27	(16)	**Parisienne Walkways**	Gary Moore (MCA)	8	8
28	(29)	**Cavatina**	John Williams (Cube)	2	28
29	(10)	**Pop Muzik**	M (MCA)	10	1
30	(27)	**I Fought The Law**	Clash (CBS)	5	17

UP AND COMING: Old Siam Sire — Wings (Parlophone); **Babylon Burning** — Ruts (Virgin); **Accidents Will Happen** — Elvis Costello (Radar); **Prime Time** — Tubes (A&M); **Maybe** — Thom Pace (RSO); **Talk To Me** — Third World (Island).

uk albums

This Week				Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(4)	**Discovery**	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	3	1
2	(3)	**Parallel Lines**	Blondie (Chrysalis)	36	1
3	(1)	**Voulez Vous**	Abba (Epic)	7	1
4	(5)	**Manifesto**	Roxy Music (Polydor)	13	4
5	(9)	**This Is It**	Various (CBS)	3	5
6	(7)	**Lodger**	David Bowie (RCA)	2	6
7	(2)	**Do It Yourself**	Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	5	2
8	(10)	**Last The Whole Night Through**	James Last (Polydor)	9	8
9	(20)	**Reach For It**	Sky (Ariola)	2	9
10	(6)	**Breakfast In America**	Supertramp (A & M)	13	2
11	(11)	**The Very Best Of Leo Sayer**	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	12	1
12	(15)	**Night Owl**	Gerry Rafferty (United Artists)	2	12
13	(8)	**Fate For Breakfast**	Art Garfunkel (CBS)	9	3
14	(23)	**Communique**	Dire Straits (Phonogram)	2	14
15	(12)	**At The Budokan**	Bob Dylan (CBS)	5	8
16	(—)	**Replicas**	Tubeway Army (Beggars Banquet)	1	16
17	(18)	**Dire Straits**	Dire Straits (Vertigo)	16	4
18	(24)	**The Undertones**	The Undertones (Sire)	5	15
19	(21)	**Bad Girls**	Donna Summer (Casablanca)	2	19
20	(13)	**Black Rose**	Thin Lizzy (Phonogram)	8	2
21	(14)	**The Billie Jo Spears Singles Album**	Billie Jo Spears (United Artists)	5	10
22	(26)	**I Am**	Earth Wind & Fire (CBS)	2	22
23	(17)	**A Monument To British Rock**	Various (Harvest)	4	17
24	(25)	**Spirits Having Flown**	Bee Gees (RSO)	20	1
25	(—)	**Out Of The Blue**	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	72	3
26	(22)	**Boogie Bus**	Various (Polystar)	4	22
27	(30)	**Rhapsodies**	Rick Wakeman (A & M)	2	27
28	(28)	**C'est Chic**	Chic (Atlantic)	20	1
29	(—)	**Go West**	Village People (Mercury)	5	21
30	(—)	**We Are Family**	Sister Sledge (Atlantic)	5	18

UP AND COMING: That Summer — Various (Arista); **In The Skies** — Peter Green (PVK); **Back To The Egg** — Wings (Parlophone); **Rickie Lee Jones** — (Warner Bros); **It's Alive** — Ramones (Sire); **Spectral Mornings** — Steve Hackett (Charisma).

us singles

This Week			
1	(1)	**Hot Stuff**	Donna Summer
2	(3)	**We Are Family**	Sister Sledge
3	(10)	**Ring My Bell**	Anita Ward
4	(4)	**The Logical Song**	Supertramp
5	(6)	**Chuck E's In Love**	Rickie Lee Jones
6	(5)	**Just When I Needed You Most**	Randy Vanwarmer
7	(8)	**You Take My Breath Away**	Rex Smith
8	(9)	**She Believes In Me**	Kenny Rogers
9	(12)	**Boogie Wonderland**	Earth Wind & Fire with The Emotions
10	(20)	**Bad Girls**	Donna Summer
11	(11)	**Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy**	Bad Company
12	(16)	**Shine A Little Love**	Electric Light Orchestra
13	(14)	**Minute By Minute**	Doobie Brothers
14	(17)	**I Want You To Want Me**	Cheap Trick
15	(18)	**Makin' It**	David Naughton
16	(2)	**Love You Inside Out**	Bee Gees
17	(7)	**Reunited**	Peaches and Herb
18	(23)	**Gold**	John Stewart
19	(13)	**Shake Your Body (Down To The Ground)**	Jacksons
20	(24)	**When You're In Love With A Beautiful Woman**	Dr Hook
21	(25)	**Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now**	McFadden & Whitehead
22	(22)	**Get Used To It**	Roger Voudouris
23	(26)	**Dance The Night Away**	Van Halen
24	(15)	**Heart Of Glass**	Blondie
25	(30)	**Does Your Mother Know**	Abba
26	(—)	**You Can't Change That**	Raydio
27	(19)	**Disco Nights (Rock Freak)**	GQ
28	(—)	**I Was Made For Lovin' You**	Kiss
29	(—)	**Shakedown Cruise**	Jay Ferguson
30	(—)	**I Can't Stand It No More**	Peter Frampton

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

us albums

This Week			
1	(1)	**Breakfast In America**	Supertramp
2	(2)	**Bad Girls**	Donna Summer
3	(4)	**Rickie Lee Jones**	
4	(3)	**We Are Family**	Sister Sledge
5	(6)	**At The Budokan**	Cheap Trick
6	(5)	**Desolation Angels**	Bad Company
7	(8)	**Minute By Minute**	Doobie Brothers
8	(—)	**I Am**	Earth Wind & Fire
9	(9)	**Flag**	James Taylor
10	(13)	**The Gambler**	Kenny Rogers
11	(12)	**Van Halen II**	Van Halen
12	(25)	**Monolith**	Kansas
13	(7)	**2 Hot!**	Peaches and Herb
14	(10)	**Spirits Having Flown**	Bee Gees
15	(17)	**State Of Shock**	Ted Nugent
16	(11)	**Sooner Or Later**	Rex Smith
17	(15)	**Parallel Lines**	Blondie
18	(27)	**Songs Of Love**	Anita Ward
19	(20)	**Wave**	Patti Smith Group
20	(21)	**Evolution**	Journey
21	(16)	**Go West**	Village People
22	(—)	**Winner Takes All**	Isley Brothers
23	(23)	**The Cars**	
24	(—)	**Discovery**	Electric Light Orchestra
25	(14)	**At The Budokan**	Bob Dylan
26	(29)	**McFadden & Whitehead**	
27	(30)	**Look Sharp!**	Joe Jackson
28	(18)	**Disco Nights**	GQ
29	(19)	**Pieces Of Eight**	Styx
30	(—)	**Greatest Hits**	Waylon Jennings

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

years 5 ago

Week ending June 18, 1974

1	**The Streak**	Ray Stevens (Westbound)
2	**Always Yours**	Gary Glitter (Bell)
3	**Hey Rock And Roll**	Showaddywaddy (Bell)
4	**Jarrow Song**	Alan Price (Warners)
5	**There's A Ghost In My House**	R. Dean Taylor (Tamla Mowtown)
6	**A Touch Too Much**	Arrows (Rak)
7	**Judy Teen**	Cockney Rebel (EMI)
8	**This Town Ain't Big Enough**	Sparks (Chrysalis)
9	**One Man Band**	Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)
10	**Sugar Baby Love**	Rubettes (Polydor)

10

Week ending June 18, 1969

1	**Ballad Of John And Yoko**	Beatles (Apple)
2	**Oh Happy Day**	Edwin Hawkins Singers (Buddah)
3	**Dizzy**	Tommy Roe (Stateside)
4	**Time Is Tight**	Booker T. and the MGs (Stax)
5	**Higher And Higher**	Jackie Wilson (MCA)
6	**Get Back**	Beatles (Apple)
7	**My Way**	Frank Sinatra (Reprise)
8	**Man Of The World**	Fleetwood Mac (Immediate)
9	**The Boxer**	Simon and Garfunkel (CBS)
10	**Living In The Past**	Jethro Tull (Island)

15

Week ending June 19, 1964

1	**It's Over**	Roy Orbison (London)
2	**You're My World**	Cilla Black (Parlophone)
3	**Someone**	Brian Poole and the Tremeloes (Decca)
4	**Here I Go Again**	Hollies (Parlophone)
5	**My Guy**	Mary Wells (Parlophone)
5	**Hello Dolly**	Louis Armstrong (London)
7	**No Particular Place To Go**	Chuck Berry (Pye Int.)
8	**Ramona**	Bachelors (Decca)
9	**Shout**	Lulu and the Luvvers (Decca)
10	**The Rise And Fall Of Flingel Bunt**	Shadows (Columbia)

Lene Lovich celebrates her re-entry to the charts with bandleader and boyfriend Les Chappell.

disco

1	**Ring My Bell**	Anita Ward (TK)
2	**Living On The Frontline**	Eddy Grant (Ensign)
3	**Boogie Wonderland**	Earth Wind and Fire With The Emotions (CBS)
4	**We Are Family**	Sister Sledge (Atlantic)
5	**H.A.P.P.Y. Radio**	Edwin Starr (RCA)
6	**Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now**	McFadden and Whitehead (Philadelphia)
7	**Dancer/Dance to Dance**	Gino Soccio (Warner Bros)
8	**Make Your Move**	Joe Thomas (TK)
9	**Hot Stuff**	Donna Summer (Casablanca)
10	**It Must Be Love**	Alton McLain and Destiny (Polydor)

POWERHOUSE PREDICTION
When You Wake Up Tomorrow — Candi Staton (Warner Bros)
Chart Supplied By: POWERHOUSE DISCO PLUS. Tel. (01) 368 9852.

reggae

Pre-release 7"

1	**Jah Love Is Sweeter**	Lacksley Castell (Orchard)
2	**Chant Down Babylon**	Tony Tuff (Soul Syndicate)
3	**Barnabus Collins**	The Lone Ranger (GG's)
4	**Cricket Lovely Cricket**	Jah Thomas (Midnite Rock)
5	**I — Thirst (Pt 2)**	Dillinger (Shaolin Temple)
6	**Abortion**	Black Ehuros (Taxi)
7	**The Way It Is**	I Kong (Top Ranking)
8	**Conversation**	Gregory Isaacs (Earthquake)
9	**Young Generation**	Bongo Pat (Rockers)
10	**Marshall Dreadlocks**	Clint Eastwood (Yabby You)

Chart supplied by Greensleeves Records, Uxbridge Rd., London W.12.

NEWS

TUBES DUE BACK — SEE PAGE 5

Pretenders for real: month-long UK tour

THE PRETENDERS, who recently figured prominently in the charts with their single 'Stop Your Sobbin', are to headline an extensive month-long summer tour — for which 23 dates have been confirmed, with the likelihood of more to come. They'll be supported on all gigs by Interview, the Virgin Records group who guested in Peter Gabriel's Christmas shows at Hammersmith. Highlight of the itinerary is a major London show at the Lyceum Ballroom on July 29, and other dates are:

CHRISSIE HYNDE

Chester Smartyz (July 9), Blackburn King George's Hall (10), Port Talbot Troubadour (12), Sheffield University (13), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (14), Jacksdale Grey Topper (15) Purley Tiffany's (16), Bournemouth Village Bowl (18), Portsmouth Mecca (19), Liverpool Eric's (20), Blackpool Norbreck Castle (21), Dumfries Stagecoach (22), Edinburgh Tiffany's (23), Ayr Pavilion (24), Chesterfield Fusion (26), Scarborough Penthouse (27), Aylesbury Friars (28), 'Norwich St Andrew's Hall (31), Newport Stowaway (August 1), Birmingham Barbarella's (2), Newcastle Mayfair (3) and Manchester Factory (4).

The band's new single 'Kid', penned by lead singer Chrissie Hynde, is released by WEA on June 29 in a special picture bag with 'Tattooed Love Boys' as the coupling. They are currently working with producer Chris Thomas on their debut album, planned for release in the early autumn.

● TOM ROBINSON is playing five late-night concerts next week at London's Collegiate Theatre in Gordon Street, W.C.1. They are part of a number of events taking place under the banner of Gay Pride Week.

● THE CRAMPS, who've just finished a UK tour with The Police, have a few gigs in their own right — at Manchester Factory (this Sunday), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (June 25), London Camden Dingwalls (26), Birmingham Barbarella's (28) and Liverpool Eric's (30). The band have a five-track 12-inch single out this week on Illegal Records titled 'The Cramps' Gravest Hits'.

● THE TOURISTS have pulled out of their guest spot in the B-52s show at London Strand Lyceum on July 8, and next week hope to announce their own major London date.

Monochrome Set touring with PragVec in package

ROUGH TRADE are sending out another package tour next month, featuring three bands associated with their record label — The Monochrome Set, PragVec and Manicured Noise — who will be on the road together (playing in a different order every night) from July 10 to 21 inclusive. The itinerary is still to be finalised, but is known to include dates in Hull, Halifax, Lincoln, Southend, Burton and London. Two singles are released to tie in with the tour — 'Expert' / 'The Follower' by PragVec (on their own Spec Records label, distributed by Rough Trade) and 'Eine Symphonie Des Grauens' / 'Lester Leaps In' by The Monochrome Set (on Rough Trade).

Lurkers carrying on

THE LURKERS are having to use hired equipment for their major London show at the Lyceum this Sunday, and on their 15-date U.S. tour for which they leave on Monday. This is due to their gear being destroyed on Thursday night last week, when their van was involved in an accident on the way back to London from Swansea. It collided with a brick lorry and ended up in two separate parts, a complete write-off. Fortunately the two roadies and lighting man travelling in the van escaped injury, but the band had to cancel their gig at Birmingham Barbarella's on Friday, before hiring new gear to continue their tour.

THE SHAM PISTOLS

A MERGER between the remnants of The Sex Pistols and the nucleus of Sham 69 now seems on the cards, with the new outfit making their debut as the climax of what will now almost certainly be Sham's farewell concert at Glasgow Apollo on June 29.

Sham's future has been in jeopardy since singer Jimmy Pursey announced, earlier this year, that he was giving up live appearances. Since then, they have completed a new album in Paris — but Pursey's developing association with Steve Jones and Paul Cook was widely regarded as the end of the line for Sham.

Now the inevitable is happening — Pursey is teaming up with Jones and Cook. But what was not foreseen is that evidently he's taking at least one other Sham member with him into the new group. The remaining Sham sidemen (presumably two) are expected to form a new band with a different name, as the 'Sham 69' tag belongs to Pursey.

It's still not clear what the new Sham-Pistols alliance will call themselves. It has been suggested that they may emerge as the new Sex Pistols, but this is only speculation, as they haven't yet made up their own minds.

● In addition to The Valves, it's understood that UK Subs will be guesting in the Glasgow concert on June 29.

Live LP due, and YES AT EARLS COURT?

YES are being lined up for a string of London concerts at the giant 15,000-capacity Earls Court stadium in August, according to their keyboards man Rick Wakeman — who claims that the gigs are already booked and awaiting announcement. He told NME that, according to his information, the band will be playing three nights there.

Reason for their decision to return to live action at that time is, apparently, that they have a live double album scheduled for release in August. Title of the set is 'Yesshows', which is a play on the name of their studio double LP of six years ago 'Yessongs'. Not only would they be able to promote it at Earls Court, but Wakeman could boost his own solo hit album 'Rhapsodies'.

Who's boot going in

ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL news of The Who's projected August open-air concert at Wembley Stadium is still awaited, it's understood that the event is already sewn up, and only a last-minute about-face would prevent it from going ahead. A spokesman for promoter Harvey Goldsmith said he expected there would be an announcement early in July.

NME reported last week that the band are also in line for another outdoor show at one of the Manchester football grounds, also in August. And it's since been learned that they may, in fact, play a string of four or five open-air concerts at key venues around the country — similar to their "The Who Put The Boot In" tour of soccer grounds a few years ago.

If this is so it would account for the delay in announcing the Wembley gig, as obviously it is desirable to reveal all the shows simultaneously. It's also believed that a top new-wave band are among the acts being lined up as special guest attractions for the London concert, and possibly elsewhere.

GARDEN PARTY AT THE BOWL?

THE OPEN-AIR 'Garden Party' at the Crystal Palace Bowl in South London is likely to be re-activated this year, after missing out in 1978. Promoter Harvey Goldsmith plans to stage a show there on a Saturday in early September, and is currently negotiating for a big-name attraction. A spokesman told NME: "If the band we want falls through, we shan't look for another act, we'll simply drop the Garden Party again this year. But there's at least a 50-50 chance of it coming together."

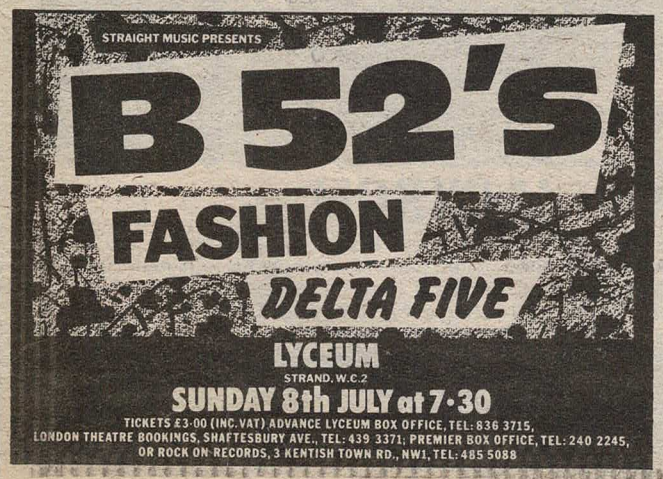
Lizzy confirm Reading

THIN LIZZY confirmed this week that they will be appearing in this year's Reading Festival, as exclusively forecast by NME three weeks ago. They top the bill on the second night of the three-day event — Saturday, August 25. Lizzy interrupt their U.S. tour specially to play the festival, in response to heavy pressure from their British supporters, but they stress it will be their only UK open-air date this year. The finishing touches are now being put to the Reading line-up, and the full bill — together with booking details — is expected to be announced next week.

Promotion for Chelsea!

CHELSEA swing back into action next week after keeping a low profile for some months. Their new album 'Chelsea' is released by Step Forward Records (distributed by Faulty Products) on June 29, and they're undertaking a series of promotional gigs as the prelude to a nationwide headlining tour. They play Norwich St. Andrew's Hall (June 25), Shrewsbury Cascade Club (26), Derby Ajanta Cinema (July 5), Nottingham Sandpiper (6), Bradford Royal Standard (8) and London Marquee (18). Still to be announced for this period are a major London date and several more provincial gigs, with a full tour following in August.

Left: Chelsea's GENE OCTOBER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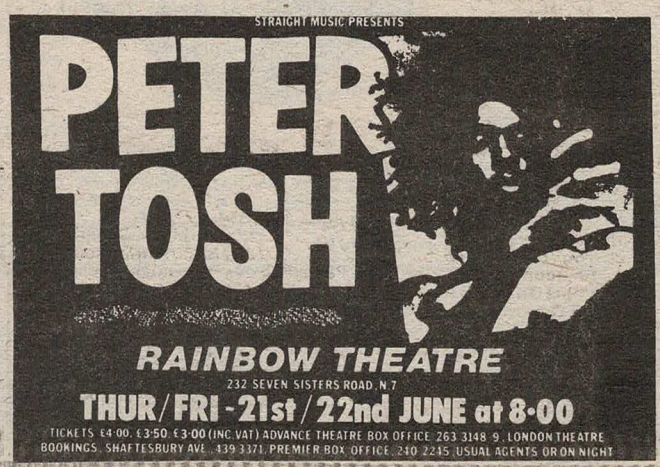
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GLASTONBURY, STONEHENGE AND DEEPLY VALE LATEST

Ungrateful Dead in late drop-out

THE GRATEFUL DEAD have decided not to come to this weekend's Glastonbury Fayre, after all — even though all arrangements for their visit had been made. They say they are too involved in recording sessions back in the States, but a festival spokesman told NME: "We regret they've taken so long to make up their minds, specially as we had already booked their plane seats and hotels."

The Fayre takes place on farmland near Shepton Mallet in Somerset from today (Thursday) until Saturday, and tickets for the three days — from Virgin shops and on the gates — cost £5. Despite the Dead's absence, the organisers have still succeeded in getting together a strong bill, and there are several surprise acts whose names aren't being announced in advance. Among those confirmed are:

Lightning Raiders. Ronnie Paisley Band, Xdreamysts, Daevid Allen, Doll By Doll, Barry Ford Band, Steve Hillage, John Cooper Clarke, Cuckoo, Nik Turner's Sphynx, UK Subs, Linda Lewis, John Martyn, Only Ones, Sky, Clayson & The Argonauts, Carol Grimes Band, Good Missionaries, Matumbi, Leyton Buzzards, The Pop Group, Tim Blake.

Several of these acts — including The Pop Group and The Good Missionaries, and possibly Steve Hillage and Tim Blake — are also expected to show up at the Stonehenge Free Festival on near-by Salisbury Plain, which runs through from now until next Monday (25). Among other confirmed acts for this event are Here & Now, The Mob, The Astronoughts, Suze Da Blooz, Danny & The Dressmakers, Vince Pie & The Crumbs, Ovni, The Funboy Five, Black Space, Dick Heley and Zounds. Full stage facilities, including lights and PA, have been erected.

● Alberto y Lost Trios Paranoias headline the opening night of the Bath Arts Festival on July 20 when, supported by John Dowie and The Spiks, they appear at Bath Pavilion.

● The Buzzcocks may appear in the Deeply Vale People's Free Festival in Lancashire (August 2-7) after all. It seems they're keen on playing at the event, but feel they may have insufficient time to do so. They've now told the organisers that they'll fit it in if they possibly can. Another probable for the festival is John Cooper Clarke, while newly-confirmed acts include The Soft Boys, UK Subs, Here & Now and The Out.

JOHN COOPER CLARKE: Glastonbury and Deeply Vale.

SIOUXSIE IN PEOPLE'S EVENT

STOP PRESS: Late news from Deeply Vale, according to the organisers on Tuesday morning, is that Siouxsie & The Banshees have agreed to play the event. The Mekons are also set.

UK SUBS HEADLINING

UK SUBS spend most of next month on the road, and their tour is highlighted by their first headline appearance at London Strand Lyceum on Sunday, July 15 (tickets £2.50). They have another London gig at the Notre Dame Hall in Leicester Square on July 31, and other dates are Reading Caribbean Club (July 2), Sheffield Limit (3), Colne Heaby Manor (5), Ashford Stour Centre (7), Leicester Adam & Eve (9), York Pop Club (11), Leeds Fan Club (12), Carlisle Wigton Market Hall (13), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (14), Scarborough Penthouse (20), Cheltenham Whitcome Lodge (21), Jacksdale Grey Topper (22) and Barnsley College of Technology (27).

More tours confirmed

SON SEALS BAND

SON SEALS BAND are at last set to visit Britain, after the cancellation of their last two projected tours — the first last year when all the members were injured in a train crash, and the second in March when they were worried about the adverse weather here. But now they're flying in this week to play six dates, climaxing in an appearance at London Victoria The Venue on June 28. Other gigs are Oxford Oriole College (this Saturday), Leicester University (Sunday), Stroud Subscription Rooms (June 25), Norwich East Anglia University (26) and Sheffield Limit Club (27).

TRADITION

TRADITION are back on the road next month, and their schedule includes an appearance at London Camden Music Machine on July 26. Other dates confirmed for the RCA band are Dunstable California (July 14), Norwich Boogie House (17), Edinburgh Astoria (19), Manchester Mayflower (20), Bristol Romeo & Juliet (23), Exeter Routes (24), Plymouth Woods Centre (25), Birmingham Rialto (27) and Cromer West Runton Pavilion (28).

LIVERPOOL PACKAGE

FOLLOWING THE success of the Mersey Sound revival concert at London Rainbow on April 29, a package tour featuring six former chart groups — Gerry & The Pacemakers, Dave Berry & The Cruisers, Wayne Fontana & The Mindbenders, The Fourmost, The Merseybeats and The Swinging Blue Jeans — goes on the road next month under the banner of "The Liverpool Explosion". The three-hour show is being presented at:

Leicester De Montfort Hall (July 9), Portsmouth Guildhall (10), Brighton Dome (11), London Lewisham Odeon (12), Bristol Colston Hall (13), Cardiff Sophia Gardens (14), Birmingham Odeon (15), Bradford St. George's Hall (16), Sheffield City Hall (17), Glasgow Apollo (18), Edinburgh Usher Hall (19), Aberdeen Capitol (20), Dundee Caird Hall (21) and Blackpool Football Ground (22). Promoters are Andrew Clark Concert Presentations. One or two more dates may be added.

LITTLE BO BITCH

LITTLE BO BITCH, who've just been signed to a long-term worldwide deal by EMI, complete their current gig series at Blackpool Norbreck Castle (tomorrow, Friday), Northallerton Sayers Club (Saturday), Sheffield Penthouse (Sunday), Redcar Old Kent Esplanade (June 25), Norwich Boogie House (26), York Pop Club(27), Dudley J.B's (29) and Jacksdale Grey Topper (30). They then start recording with producer Andy Arthurs, and their debut album will be issued in the autumn on EMI's new house label, preceded by a single in September.

GONZALEZ

GONZALEZ promote their new single 'Ain't No Way To Treat A Lady', issued on the Sidewalk label on June 29, by way of a series of gigs highlighted by an appearance at London Victoria The Venue on July 7. Other dates are Slough Langley College (tomorrow, Friday), Bracknell Sports Centre (Saturday), Leicester Romeo & Juliet (June 25), Derby Romeo & Juliet (26), Oxford Wadham College (27), Exeter University (29), Harlow Festival (30), Birmingham Romeo & Juliet (July 1), Bristol Romeo & Juliet (2), Norwich Cromwells (5), Swindon Brunel Rooms (6), Liverpool Romeo & Juliet (9) and Brighton Sherrys (10).

TRIBESMAN

TRIBESMAN, the nine-strong British reggae band fronted by singer Maria Ffolkes, will be going out on a full UK tour toward the end of July. It will coincide with the release of their new album for The Label, titled 'Streetlevel'. It's preceded this weekend by the single 'Finsbury Park', extracted from the LP and available in both seven and 12-inch forms. The band are taking part in seven European festivals in the next ten days, but they return home to play Watford Cassio College (July 6) and Norwich Boogie House (10) as a prelude to their tour proper.

JOE JACKSON

JOE JACKSON, whose debut album 'Look Sharp' is a U.S. Top Thirty hit, has lined up ten dates to promote his new A&M single 'Is She Really Going Out With Him' for release on July 6. They are Sheffield Limit Club (June 28), Liverpool Eric's (29), Manchester Polytechnic (30), Portsmouth Locarno (July 5), London Camden Music Machine (7), Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (9), Guildford Civic Hall (10), Nottingham Playhouse (12), Birmingham Digbeth Civic Hall (13) and Retford Porterhouse (14). His band comprises Gary Sanford (guitar), Graham Maby (bass) and Dave Houghton (drums) and, after these dates, they go into the studio to start work on Jackson's new album.

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After tour of Continent

JULY GIGS BY TUBES

THE TUBES pay an unexpected return visit to Britain in the middle of next month, on their way home to the States after completing their European commitments. Straight Music have set another four concerts for them — at Bristol Colston Hall (July 12), Portsmouth Guildhall (13), Poole Wessex Hall (14) and Oxford New Theatre (15). Tickets are on sale now priced £4, £3.50 and £2.50 — except at Poole where all tickets are £3.75. The Portsmouth booking is particularly significant, because the outfit have previously been banned from that city — however, the council's Leisure Committee caught one of the shows in their recent UK tour, and immediately decided to lift the ban.

Mouzon's Venue gig

ALPHONSE MOUZON Band return to Britain next week to headline a one-off show at London Victoria The Venue on Wednesday, June 27 (tickets £3.50). Mouzon — who played with Weather Report and Larry Coryell, among others, before forming his own band four years ago — was last in London in February, when he appeared with Herbie Hancock at Hammersmith Odeon.

● ROBERT GORDON has cancelled his one-off at The Venue on June 30, announced two weeks ago. After completing an extensive European tour as support to Ian Dury, he flew home to New York last week, apparently motivated by personal family reasons.

GRACE BACK AND BALIN OUT?

Starship enterprise

JEFFERSON STARSHIP have persuaded Grace Slick (above) to re-join the line-up, according to reports from America. She hasn't worked with them since she became ill on the band's European tour a year ago, which resulted in her missing out on their show at Knebworth last summer, when Marty Balin handled the vocals on his own.

Grace announced that, when she recovered, she would pursue a solo career — but it now seems she's decided to return to the fold. The report also suggests that, at the same time, founder member Balin has left Starship — though it's not clear if this is coincidental, or in protest at Slick's return. At press-time it was not possible to confirm either report, although a London spokesman said he'd heard that "something to that effect was in the air".

IN BRIEF

ELTON JOHN's recent visit to Russia is the subject of a 90-minute ATV special, to be fully networked by ITV at a peak time in the autumn. It follows him on his travels to Leningrad and Moscow, and features him in concert in those two cities.

BLACK SLATE have confirmed four new London gigs. They play Camden Music Machine (June 28) and Regent's Park Bedford College (29) then, after a tour of Scandinavia, return to headline at Oxford St. 100 Club (July 19) and Hackney Mayfair Cinema (21).

STRAIGHT 8 interrupt recording sessions to play four dates in the next three weeks — at Sheffield Limit Club (tomorrow, Friday), Burton 76 Club (June 29), London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (30) and Hitchin College (July 13).

THE ENID play three dates next week, to aid promotion of their new Pye single 'Dam Busters March/Land Of Hope And Glory'. They are Nottingham Commodore Club (June 25), Sheffield Crucible Theatre (27) and Reading University (29).

ROGER CHAPMAN and The Shortlist have been booked for another two nights at London Victoria The Venue this Friday and Saturday (22-23), following their sell-out gigs there in April.

THE HOT RODS GIVEN THE COLD SHOULDER

EDDIE and THE HOT RODS returned to London last week after a disastrous visit to Spain, on what was supposed to have been a mini-tour. Their first show, an open-air concert in Madrid, was cancelled at the last minute because the promoter had made no provision for power supplies.

They played in Bilbao the next day, but the following morning — when they were due to fly to Barcelona for another gig — they found the promoter had disappeared, taking the air tickets with him and without paying the band or the hotel.

They eventually managed to scrape together sufficient cash to pay their expenses and travel back to Britain, but they've now decided to steer clear of all Spanish offers in future.

BUDGET SHOCKS UP go ticket and record prices

RECORD and ticket prices are up this week, as the result of the expected increase in Value Added Tax announced in the Budget. Whether you're buying an album or going to a concert, you'll find that another seven per cent tax has been slapped on to the basic cost. And that is the minimum because, due to "rounding up" procedures, some increases will be in the region of ten per cent.

Increases in record prices vary considerably from one company to another, with some applying less than the required rate (absorbing the balance themselves), while others have seen fit to top up the extra VAT with a slight price rise. As an example, EMI's new prices are singles 96p (from 90p) and albums £4.69 (instead of £4.40), £5.01 (from £4.70) and £5.31 (from £4.99).

Arista deserve special mention for only increasing their singles by one penny. Previously priced at 99p, they now cost £1, with the company opting to foot the rest of the tax bill. By the same token, their de-luxe albums are being pegged at £5, though mid-range LPs go up by the standard 15 per cent.

Other companies (A&M among them) apply the strict seven per cent increase, so that a 99p single goes up to £1.05 — but others were still dithering about new prices at press-time, and it's believed that some labels are considering an increase to £1.10.

The cost of gig-going also rises as the result of the VAT increase. As an indication of what to expect, on a £5 ticket pre-Budget, the promoter paid 40p in VAT and was left with £4.60. At the new tax level, a ticket price of £5.42 would be necessary for the promoter to take £4.60 nett. Similarly, a £3.50 ticket would have to rise to £3.79 for the promoter to retain the same balance.

But obviously these new prices will be "rounded off", not only for convenience at the box-office, but also to cover the increased VAT in other promotion expenditure such as printing and advertising. So the indication is that the average concert ticket, in the £3 to £5 range, will rise by about 50p.

Smaller gigs on the club and pub circuit won't be affected so dramatically. A £1 admission would need to rise to £1.09 to achieve the same nett balance. And it seems likely that agents and venues will either raise a £1 entrance to £1.10, or absorb the extra cost themselves — or book cheaper acts!

In many cases, prices of tickets already on sale will remain unchanged, with promoters electing to absorb the extra tax themselves — though the chances are they'll recoup their losses on subsequent tours!

And of course, they are now having to re-think their costings for upcoming tours and events. For instance, Reading Festival organiser Jack Barrie said he had been hoping to announce the bill this week, but now finds he's unable to do so until he has re-adjusted the finances.

● Also affected by similar percentage increases are radios, TV sets, electrical equipment and instruments. This means that, theoretically, gear previously costing £75 should go up to £81.20 — or a rise from £200 to £216.50.

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OFF THE RECORD

Chief Rat BOB GELDOF

Rats follow up their No. 1 hit

THE BOOMTOWN RATS' first single since their chart-topping 'Rat Trap' comes out on July 13 on the Ensign label. Titled 'I Don't Like Mondays', it was recorded in France and penned by Bob Geldof, and was premiered by the band at last month's Loch Lomond Festival. The Rats are now writing and rehearsing new material in London, and later in the summer they start recording their third album for early autumn release.

● **Donna Summer** follows her his single 'Hot Stuff' with the rush-release this weekend of the title track from her current Casablanca album 'Bad Girls'.

Monks ain't got nun

THE MONKS, who shot to chart prominence recently with their 'Nice Legs, Shame About The Face', follow it up this weekend with a new single titled 'I Ain't Gettin' Any' — issued on the Carrere label in a full-colour picture bag. The band are currently working on their debut album, and they'll be undertaking a full UK tour in August to coincide with its release.

WAINWRIGHT TO RADAR

LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III has been signed by Radar Records, who will issue his live album in early September. This will coincide with his extensive British tour, currently being set up by the Asgard Agency, starting on September 9 and scheduled to run for five weeks.

● Stand by for the first shamrock-shaped single! It's 'Loneliness' by **Horslips**, taken from their album 'The Man Who Built America' and issued by DJM tomorrow (Friday). Out on the same day and label is the debut single from **Studio Sweethearts** titled 'I Believe'.

● Out this weekend is a new single by **Driver 67**, whose 'Car 67' was arguably the most off beat hit of the year, reaching No. 7 in the NME Chart. The follow-up is 'Going My Way' and it's on Logo Records.

Heartbreakers: live at Maxie's

THE HEARTBREAKERS are back on the recording scene after a lengthy absence, their last album — on the Track label — having been hit by production problems. Still fronted by Johnny Thunders, and featuring two other original members (Jerry Nolan and Walter Lure) plus a new drummer, they now crop up on Beggar's Banquet with the album 'Live At Maxie's'. It was recorded at the New York niterie at the end of last year, and is released on July 6 — the same day as a single taken from it, titled 'Get Off The Phone'.

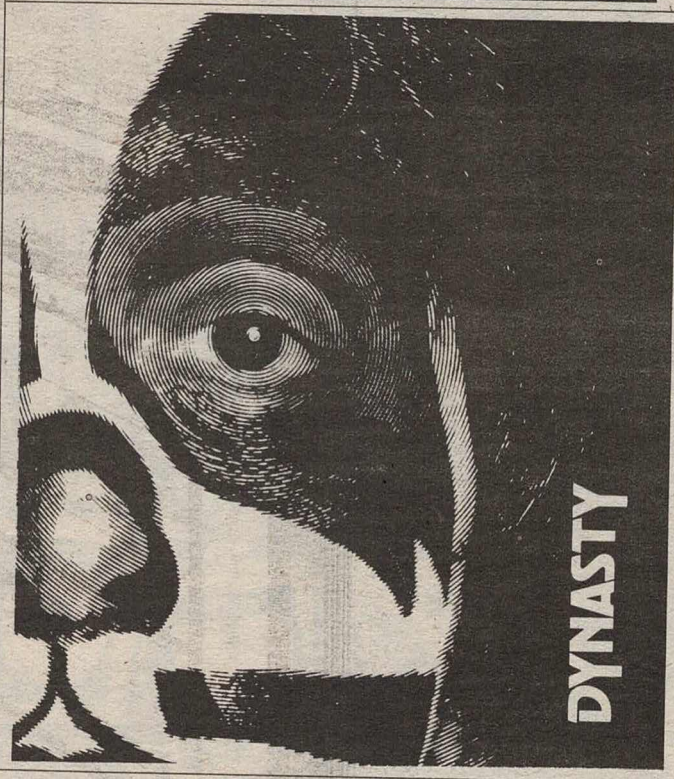
STEVE DIGGLE

Pianist Shelley on Cocks single

THE BUZZCOCKS' new single, issued by United Artists on July 6, is unusual in two respects. The main title 'Harmony In My Head', which the band have already featured on stage this year, was penned by Steve Diggle — his second A-side composition after 'Promises'. It's coupled with 'Something Goes Wrong Again', on which composer Pete Shelley plays piano for the first time.

Arista-Albion pact

ARISTA have signed a licensing deal for the distribution of the Albion Records label in Britain. First release under the new pact is a debut single by noted producer Martin Rushent, singing his self-penned 'Give It All You've Got', out this weekend. It's followed on June 29 by 'Don't Mean Nothing At All' by Scottish band The Valves. And on July 6 there's 'Sweet Narcissus' by former Bryan Ferry sideman Ruan O'Lochlainn. Upcoming Albion albums include sets from Ian Gomm and Pinpoint.



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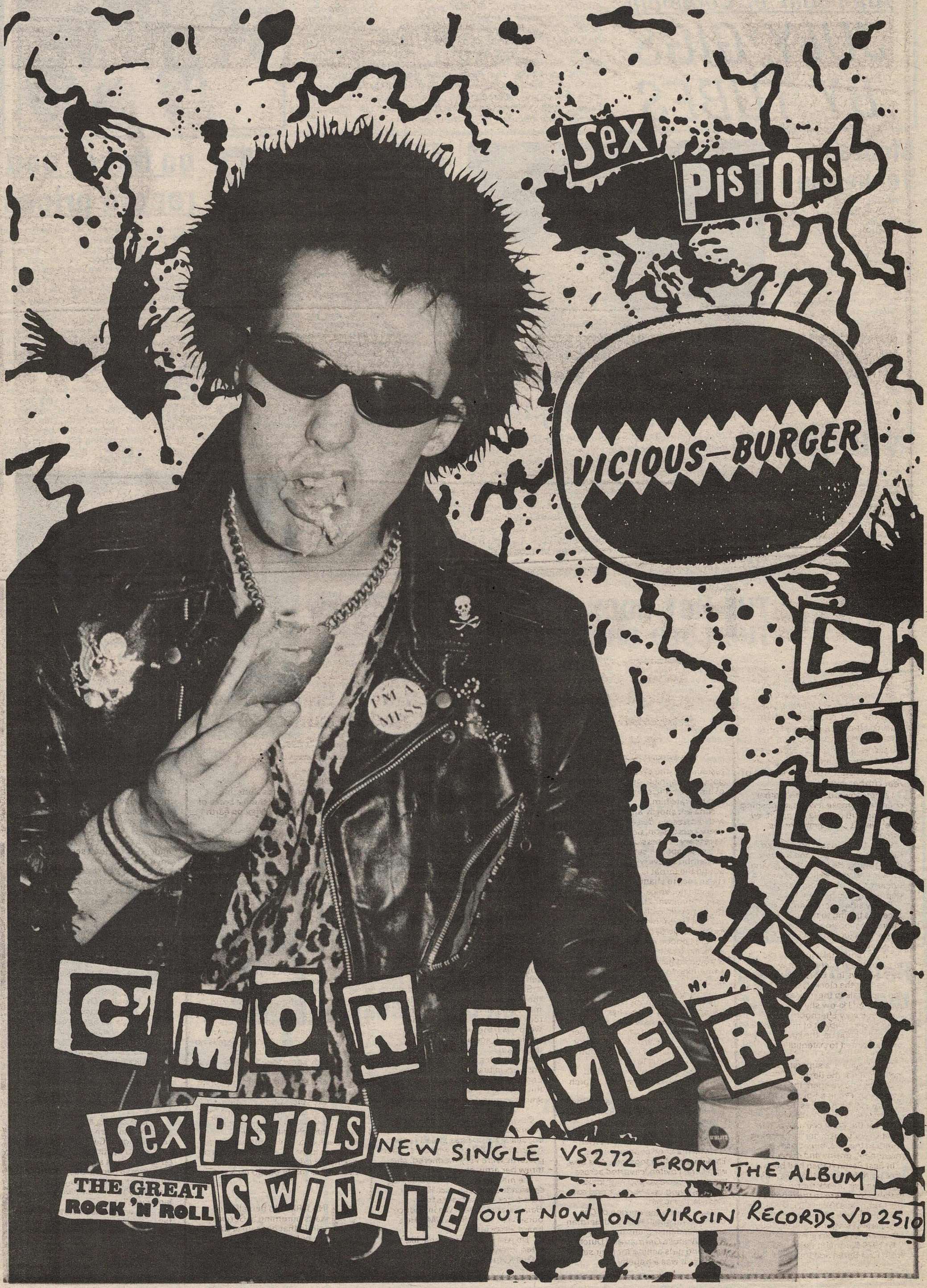
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NINA HAGEN. Pic: PENNIE SMITH

The Euro-woman Cometh

Move over Monsieur Burnel, Fraulein Hagen got there first . . . MAX BELL meets Euro-rock phenomenon NINA HAGEN, and succumbs to her charismatic skintight black catsuit.

THE LOBBY of Blakes Hotel in Kensington is a hive of useless activity. As I walk through the open glass doors with the *just-so* scrolling I am confronted by elegant young men in expensive clothes bustling around with Hoovers and dusters, flicking imaginary specks of dust from the leaves of real rubber plants.

I amble towards a plush leather couch and smoke a while, depositing my dead butt in the large pot at my side; well, it's either that or the carpet.

One of the elegant young men notices this *faux pas* and minces over, tutting. He peers through the foliage and with delicate precision unearths the offending object, depositing it in his pan. Plink.

By my side a gent with a cut-glass accent is talking to the only interesting looking person in the room. He's jotting down the results on a pad.

"If you could take just one record to your desert island what would it be?" he says in a world-weary voice.

I look at the clock. Nearly 11am. I too must talk to the interesting person and I know she has a plane to catch this very afternoon. *She* is Nina Hagen, subject of much record company build up, the kind of furore only accorded to potential hot property.

Nina Hagen is a superstar in the making, if not the flesh.

Unless you've spent the last few months asleep in a hole you'll know that Ms Hagen is of East Berlin origins, that she was allowed to leave for the West because of her artistic tendencies, her burgeoning career in the arts, music and movement, drama and dance.

In East Berlin Hagen had been a sore point for the authorities. Her involvement in rock music, her inability to adhere to the tenets of the Communist Youth Organization, her liaison with the dissident poet and protest singer Wolf Biermann, all made her a marked woman.

In 1976 Biermann was expelled from East Berlin and took up residence in the West where like all good communists he spends much of his time criticising the regimes that tolerate him.

Nina left shortly after him, along with a mass exodus of artists of every persuasion, packing a few necessary possessions and her secret weapon, a set of vocal chords that embrace every spectrum of sound the throat is capable of, from mean rock to shattering operetta.

Given her voice, her looks, her association with Biermann she soon found herself with a contract on CBS in West Germany. She had a sheaf of songs but no band and no sound. A visit to London in the middle of the punk explosion, early 1977, introduced her to a scene, something to imitate, take home and dilute.

Although Nina was friendly with The Slits (and Johnny Rotten swooned when he saw her), she went home and assembled a very orthodox German band to back her. They made a record. It wasn't very good. But in Nina European youth found an image it liked.

In West Germany and Holland Nina Hagen became an idol, a torch singer.

Then she broke up her band. She fell in love with a Dutch rock star, *the* Dutch rock star, Herman Brood. Their faces adorned billboards in Amsterdam and Munich and their records matched chart positions. They made a film together, *Cha Cha,* with Lene Lovitch, cavorted across the social circles of hip nightclub Europe, living up their rock and roll lifestyle to the hilt.

Then during the making of *Cha Cha,* a bombshell! Nina and Herman announced their plans to marry.

For all those German and Dutch boys and girls aching for their sex symbols it was a tragedy . . .

Weeping teenagers plunged into canals and ripped down their posters. In West Germany Nina's public felt betrayed; their plastic lover would live in Holland with Brood, for freedom, for art, for love.

NINA HAGEN'S gradual sojourn westwards ended with the release here of her debut album, 'Nina Hagen Band', two months ago though it was already the largest selling import and most admired picture disc known to man etc.

In order to bolster sales and cash in on the guaranteed publicity machine, CBS brought her to England for four days of intensive self promotion.

She is, in fact, hard to resist but the chappie in the corner of Blakes is managing all right. "Do you think rock music (he pronounces the words as if they indicate an unpleasant social disease) is important?"

Nina fiddles with her fingers, then answers in broken but adequate English. "Rock music is the music of this time, like Chopin and Beethoven were the music of their time."

"Oh! I disagree!"

Downstairs there is a coffee room. Pennie Smith arrives and we take our seats. Pennie has already seen Nina on *TOGWT* and whispers: "Her gestures were very mannered, she threw her arms about too much."

The man with the notepad comes downstairs and joins us. He introduces himself; he's from *Harpers and Queen*. We introduce ourselves; we're from *NME*. He's heard all about us.

"Do you interview people like this often, rock people I mean?"

Quite often.

"Oh! How awful!"

It's a living.

Nina Hagen comes cluttering down the steps, clutching a brace of black rubbish bags. What on earth has she got in there?

"Joost my luggage." She slumps down beside me and gives *H&Q* a dirty look.

"Well, I must be off. Have fun!"

Coffee arrives and orange juice. Nina matches me there but doesn't on the trot and several cigarettes. She matches me there but doesn't give me one of hers. She fiddles with my tape recorder, Pennie fiddles with her cameras. The other occupants in the coffee shop stare indiscreetly. A CBS press aide motions to his watch.

What are you doing here Nina? I ask innocently.

"I am here to tell the people about my German language record and make some interviews and tell the people that I have split with my old band because we didn't love each other any more and when there is no love there is no good music."

I already know this. The CBS person told me she'd say just that. It's a good start. I give Nina the once over. My eyes linger on her attire. She is wearing a black clinging cat suit like Honore Blackman's in *The Avengers*. She is also sporting a rather nifty chastity belt with bondage accoutrements and gently rattling chains. I toy with the idea of asking for the combination but decide this might be too forward.

NINA GRINS to herself and starts humming, a German refrain that goes up at the edges like her mouth, a clown's mouth but without any make-up today. She is prettier than her pictures, I decide. Her hair is unbrushed. Her hair is several shades of purple and pink, styled in loose locks.

She sniffs and snorts, but doesn't appear to have a cold.

Is it true that you fired your band because they were all socialists?

"Socialists? What does this mean? Aah sozialistes . . . it is true that I wanted more money than one musician for an evening, because my work is harder. I must use my throat really loud, so after a concert I don't speak. I must sing the next night as well. Paah! The band don't get poor when I have more money. If they were friends they would have understood. I don't see them anymore."

Nina explains that now she will be using Dutch musicians. The musicians in Amsterdam are plentiful and good and the new music will therefore be better than ever.

I imply that the music on her first album was not so good. The settings turned her voice into an empty gimmick, the arrangements made it sound like Focus, or The Tubes. Horrible.

"I don't like the long songs, I hate the guitar solos. This time it will be blues but with a rock beat . . . as in my special way. Speedrock."

Although she has become a close friend of The Slits, Ari Forster in particular, Nina doesn't implement the punk mythology into her own songs. Wasn't it contradictory to foist the radical sentiments of her most powerful songs onto a very average background of tedious hard rock?

"I was hanging around The Slits, a groupie and a fan. Ari and me wrote some songs in German. I can't remember the titles but they are not punk. This isn't surprising. I know the German people need good music and good messages to identify with, in their own language."

Yet now, Nina is no longer the favourite in her own country, the punters are sick of her swanning around the Continent with old Herman.

■ *Continues over*

NINA HAGEN

■ *From previous page*

"They are sick of me because I'm leaving to be Dutch. My manager made it hard for me with the press when I make the film *Cha Cha* and because I sing and follow Herman Brood around. Then *Die Stern* came and did a story; they said that I leave West Berlin to marry and will have my own band, not Herman's. So now they are sick of me again."

Herman and Nina will live in conjugal bliss in the port of Amsterdam but have no intention of making an honest go of the thing. Extramarital relations are not only tolerated but expected.

"I can feel no jealousy, no hatred. I love women as much as men and we will not see each other so often, because of work. Holland is so free, you can smoke joints anywhere and they don't discriminate against me in the streets like in Berlin. I can sit there with leather clothes on, like a prostitute, and no one disturbs me. I can have my hair pinkissimo, anything. So it sounds very good in my eyes to be a Hollander. I cannot live any more as 'Nina Hagen — Deutsche Pop Star'."

West Germany might be Margaret Thatcher's ideal country. They have no standing army but they do have a massive, heavily armed police force. At the turn of this decade a law was passed called the *Verufsverboten*, which forbids radicals to join the so-called respectable professions — lawyers, teachers, engineers, civil servants etc.

Theoretically the law was designed to halt the progress of terrorism, but in fact only encourages the existence of organisations like Baader Meinhof.

Nina has a very low opinion of West Germany: "I am not a communist I am Nina, but the German people are so stupid. Many learned nothing from Hitler and they will be stupid again and again. It is their mentality. They are not quick in the head.

"So it is possible for the new President to be an old Nazi . . . and on the other hand the country is very rich and clean and the shops are filled with fashionable things, things to buy.

"I wasn't frightened to say this in Berlin. If the journalist decides not to print it, he must please himself.

"Once I was stopped in a car with two friends. The police point a gun here (holds her stomach). I tried to move it away and they went mad. I told them to look at my record in the window but they say they never heard of Nina Hagen."

Pic: PENNIE SMITH

HOWEVER TRITE or obvious some of the woman's lyrics may seem to an Englishperson, it's obvious that her best songs do convey truths that need to be stated in a repressive environment. The listener will draw private conclusions from material like 'Aufm Bahnhof Zoo', 'Rangehn' or 'Heiss', may find them examples of simple lust, but the connotations go deeper.

If many of Hagen's songs chronicle her feminist aggression, her refusal to be considered a sex object, the abortion she underwent two years ago ('Unbeschreiblich Weiblich'), then they are not to be taken as unwarranted attacks on the male gender in general.

It is a pity, however, that the lyrics were dressed up with her band's third generation cock-rock strut.

"I am a feminist but if you think I make no exceptions then you don't understand the lyrics. In some songs I say that a boy cannot put me down; if he tries I think he is crap and I don't stay with him.

"I am not a fuck machine — when the juice gets out of his body I can only laugh, ha, ha. It is better for me to walk on the streets with Frau Holle, the woman who makes cushions. Then the snow will fall from the sky. You know this story?"

Errr, no I don't.

"It's a children's story, very popular in Germany. I change it so that I walk with Frau Holle, she is an old lady, and I am a prostitute. I don't see the man in the song anymore."

What makes Herman different from the rest, I wonder. The marks on his arms? His Hells Angels bodyguards? His gold records?

"Herman is a rock and roll junkie. It's a very good relationship. I am a rock and roll junkie. In the film *Cha Cha* there are lots of rock and roll junkies — we get money from bank robberies to make a rock mafia. There are Hells Angels, drugs, hallucinations."

A decadent kind of film, eh?

"Decadent? Nooo! It's a lovely film. Why decadent? Herman was a real junkie, ten times a day, fix, fix in his vein. We can make much from his life and our own story together. It comes out at Christmas."

Sounds like typical festive viewing.

"We had a good kind of anarchy with Herman, me and Lene. Every day we change the script, make up the words and then shoot — in English, German and Dutch. Music must always be changing; in the film we show this. I steal Herman's musicians because my power is so big and he is an old junkie . . . he has no power."

What do you think of Mick Jagger?

"He was good once. I was sitting in a discotheque in Berlin and they play only disco and Stones. I asked the barkeepsr, must he only play this? I go very aggressive if you only play this. I ask him for X-Ray Spex? 'Nein!' For Bowie 'Fame' or 'Golden Years'? 'Nein!' For Herman Brood? 'Nein!' Then he says 'Ja, I have Rolling Stones, I hate it, bom, bom, bom but Mick Jagger's voice was better than the disco shit."

Do you see John Lydon these days?

"He fell in love with me but I never heard PiL yet."

NINA IS 24 now, a wild child. She is also a closet intellectual spawned by artistic parents. She reads Bulgarkov and Dostoevsky. She is not an idiot. Her favourite singers are the German idols of the 20s and 30s, Dietrich and Valeska Gert and Brecht. Her life is a seventies cabaret:

"Valeska had short black hair and much lipstick, even when she was 80. In Germany she made cabarets, death dancing, body dancing, mime. She left in the Hitler era and went to America. There she had to build a new discotheque every month from nothing because she was persecuted, a German woman."

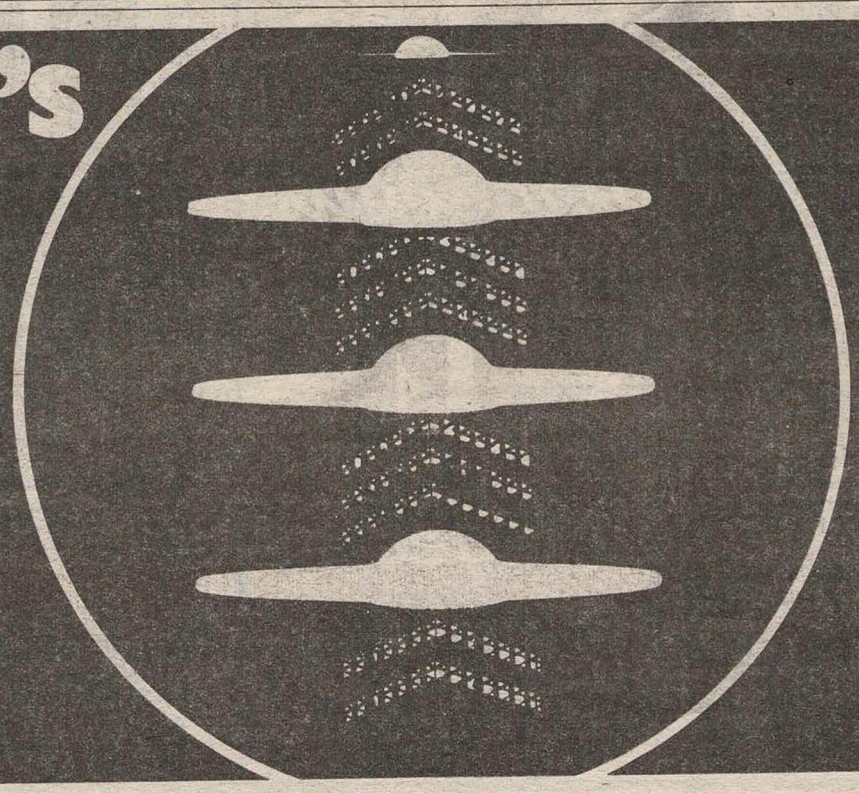
It seems unlikely that when Nina Hagen visits America for the first time she will be treated in the same way. Now she is returning to Stuttgart to meet Brood. Her limousine is ready. Pennie takes her upstairs and starts snapping. Two men digging up the road a few doors down the road stop, turn off their drills and gape in wide eyed amazement as Nina poses like a natural.

I ask her when she is coming to play in England: "When the first snow falls, I will come and make some concerts".

The workmen nudge each other lecherously. When the first snow falls they will probably come and make some tickets.

I wonder what it will be like?

New York's attacking London!



TELEVISION
12 inch collector's single
'Little Johnny Jewel Parts 1 and 2'
NYC 1

REVELONS
'The Way (You Touch My Hand)'/'97 Tears'
NYC 3

IDOLS
'You'/'Girl That I Love'
NYC 2

Thanx to Ork.

ORK RECORDS

SYLVESTER

The Outrageous Tour

JUNE 22 SWINDON – BRUNEL ROOMS
JUNE 23 LONDON – HAMMERSMITH ODEON
JUNE 24 BLACKPOOL – TIFFANYS
JUNE 25 NEWCASTLE – MADISONS
JUNE 26 MIDDLESBROUGH – MADISONS
JUNE 27 EDINBURGH – USHER HALL
JUNE 29 NORWICH – CROMWELLS
JUNE 30 WATFORD – BAILEYS
JULY 1 BIRMINGHAM
JULY 2 LEICESTER – BAILEYS
JULY 3 BRIGHTON – SHERRYS

TOUR PROMOTED BY STRAIGHT MUSIC & MARSHALL ARTS

SYLVESTER

The Outrageous Album

'MIGHTY REAL'. FTA 3009 AS ADVERTISED ON TV.

SYLVESTER

The Outrageous Single

'STARS' 7" LIMITED EDITION PINK VINYL AND PICTURE BAG. FTC 177.
12" LIMITED EDITION 12 FTC 177.

EMI

Fantasy

Licensed Repertoire Division, EMI Records Ltd., 9 Thayer St., London W.1. 01-486 7144

COMMUNIQUÉ

From Dire Straits. A recorded delivery.

UK Tour With special guests Metro.
20th June HAMMERSMITH Odeon
21st June HAMMERSMITH Odeon
All tour dates SOLD OUT.

Dire Straits

COMMUNIQUÉ
Produced by Jerry Wexler & Barry Beckett.
Management Ed Bicknell/
Damage Management

Album 9102 031
Cassette 7231 021

VERTIGO

marketed by phonogram

THRILLS

~~19/6d~~ ~~35/11d~~ ~~£4.31p~~

£6?

BUDGET SHOCKER!

FIRST the bad news . . .

In the same way as the one pound-plus gallon of petrol has become a cruel reality, so has the quid single.

Though, at press time, all the new starting prices have still to be posted (see News Pages), with few exceptions, you could be shelling out anything from £1.00 up to a possible £1.25 for your next seven incher.

If that's not sufficient to make one's blood run cold, the spectre of the six quid album now hovers ominously on the vinyl horizon. These figures are far above those projected by the recent seven percent VAT increase from 8 to 15%.

Though EMI had their annual price increase in the pipeline, most companies have used the VAT increase to simultaneously announce "overheads" increases.

Great timing fellas!

Let's get down to some single sums.

Take the "old price" 90p single. Well, the increased VAT should bump it up to 96.5p. So why, you ask, should you have to pay £1.10?

Here's a rough breakdown. It now costs the dealer 64p (instead of around 61p) to buy a single wholesale. Add 14p VAT and you've got 78p. This leaves the dealer with a 32p profit margin (as opposed to his previous 31p). If, like so many shops, he discounts his singles by 10p, he reduces this profit drastically, few businesses operate on such low retail profits.

And albums? Some companies have absorbed "overheads" increases or shared the burden with the dealers but, if, as rumoured, some labels impliment a suggested 15 per cent increase on top of the VAT increases, it means that a £4.99 album could hit the racks at £6.11. As it is, UA might require you to cough up £5.99 for the next Hawkwind escapade.

Many companies have projected these figures but now, fearing that the market will reject such increases are waiting to see if there is a sales slump before pressing for further increases.

Just to make things look a bit brighter, the record industry is whispering about another vinyl shortage! Vinyl, of course, is a petroleum by-product . . .

Now a word from an expert.

Cliff Gater is a floor manager for HMV Records on Oxford Street — London's biggest diskery — and in his professional opinion such drastic increases could have a long-term damaging effect on our favourite entertainment.

Apart from possible escalation in blank cassette sales "home taping is the only way a lot of people can now afford music" — Gater forsees both a drop in turnover and less experimentation by the majors.

"Most retailers," admits a grim-faced Gater, "noticed a drop in the sales of back-catalogue long before the present increases." According to Gater, earlier this year Phonogram instigated a 'Going For A Song' campaign, pegging back-catalogue at £3.75. Due to its slow start, the first Dire Straits album was included in the deal which caused the company to drop a quantity of quids once it scaled the charts. Even so, the campaign didn't activate sufficient across-the-board sales stimulus and was quietly dropped.

From experience, Gater can forsee thousands of albums being deleted from the catalogues, an escalation in the cut-out trade, and the market being flooded with cheaply pressed/cheaply priced Italian imports. Due to the collapsing economy of such countries as Italy, it's cheaper to bulk-buy imports than to purchase home-pressed product. English albums are now the third most expensive in Europe.

As back-catalogues dwindle, so could the number of new releases. Many record companies will only invest in current buying trends instead of attempting to instigate new ones. And, to make certain of maximum profits, they'll purposely hike the recommended retail price on a sure-fire chart certainty, knowing that such albums will be discounted nationally.

With few exceptions, the majors are now content to relax on the sidelines and allow the small independent operations to get on with the unenviable task of sorting out the good from the bad.

"Most major labels," insists Gater, "no longer need to employ large A & R departments. All they've got to do is send someone around the stores once a week to see which small label records are selling and then make the artist an attractive offer to sign with them." Cynical but true!

Though, like a number of shops, HMV offers attractive discounts on selected releases, they refuse to be drawn into the cut-throat discount war currently waged between various retail chains.

The result of these hostilities is that many local retailers could go under. It's possible that in future, there'll just be one large discount house in your manor, probably run by the mobs!

Without naming names, there are certain consortiums that aren't required to show either a large annual profit or a regular profit growth. In some instances, they can get away with breaking even or showing a small loss. Such businesses weren't set up for the sole purpose of selling records. They exist either as a means for 'laundering' money or as long-term property investments. Any eventual profit will be realised from the sale, at a huge return on the original investment, of such prominent business locations.

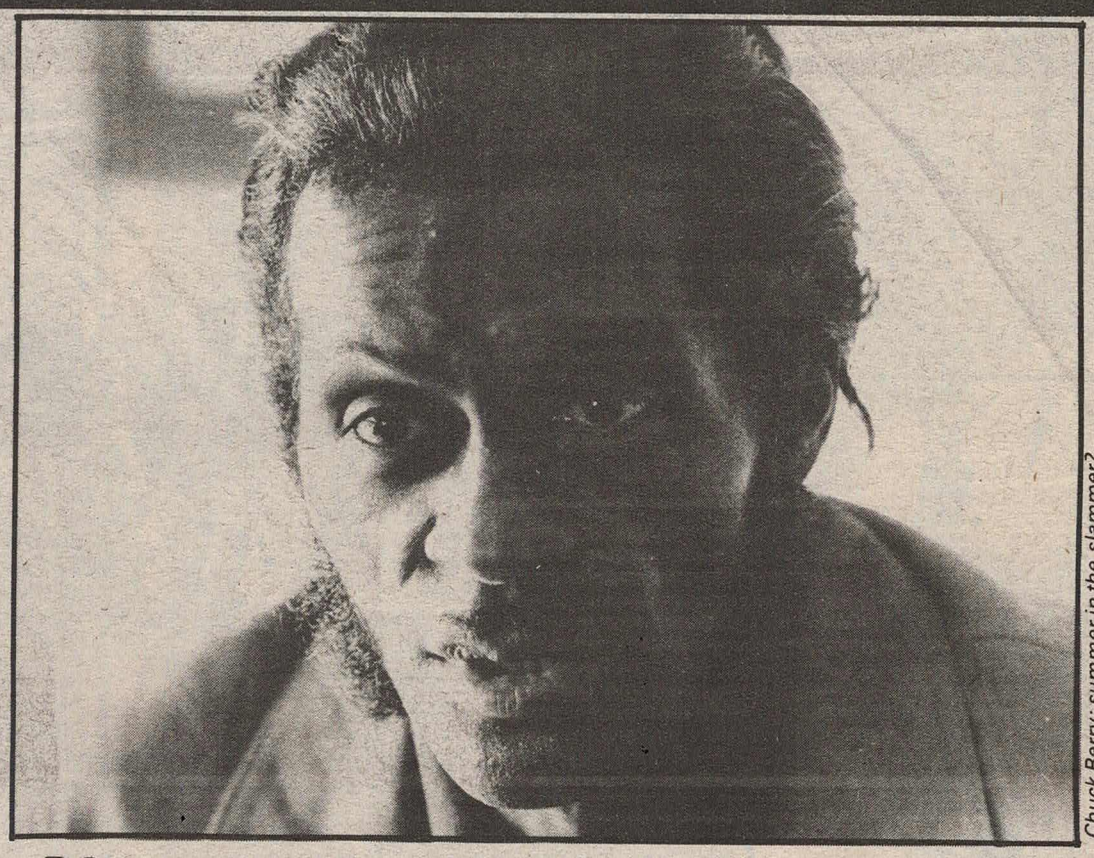
Whether in such an environment shoe-string operations will continue to flourish is debatable. But one can hope that it won't be the end of an era. As the smaller labels don't carry the same overheads as the majors, maybe they'll only be forced to increase the VAT rate and nothing more.

Has the British record industry only managed to shaft itself then? Gater has the last word. "Because it will become too costly for most shops to carry extensive British-pressed back catalogues, there could be a marked trend towards importing such records from abroad. On the other hand, many albums could disappear for ever from the shelves. It could become like the States where unless you're prepared to hunt around the cut-outs or bargain bins, it will be impossible to buy most records three months after they've been released."

Hope I've made your day!

ROY CARR

THRILLS



Chuck Berry: summer in the slammer?

No particular place to go (but jail)

WHAT'S A polite way of putting it? Chuck Berry has always had a reputation of being . . . well, frugal would be the kindest word.

He has always, often to the detriment of his live performances, had a taste for cut-price touring bands. He's frequently made demands for cash payments before he's so much as set foot on stage, and on European tours he has also demanded that those payments be made in U.S. dollars.

This famous frugality has, however, now dropped Chuck Berry into legal hot water that could, at worst, mean five years in jail and a fine of $10,000.

Last week, in a Memphis court, 52-year-old Berry pleaded guilty to charges of failing to report and pay U.S. federal taxes to the tune of some $100,000.

It seems that in the fiscal year 1973, he declared a total income of $374,982. On investigation, it turned out that his real income was closer to $600,000 and that he had knowingly deprived Uncle Sam of some one hundred grand in tax.

The American Internal Revenue Service takes a very dim view of this kind of behaviour and decided to throw the book at the Godfather of rock'n'roll guitarists. Having pleaded guilty, Berry is currently awaiting sentencing on July 13.

This isn't Chuck Berry's first brush with the law.

In 1962, after two trials, he was jailed for two years under the Mann Act which forbids the importation of women for immoral purposes across an American state line.

It was alleged that Chuck had picked up an Apache prostitute in El Paso, Texas and taken her to work as a hat-check girl in his St Louis, Missouri nightclub. When Berry later fired the girl, she went to the police and claimed that part of her duties at the club was selling sexual favours to the customers.

Since that time Berry has always protested his innocence, and in recent years has even taken to claiming that the incident never took place and that he never served any time.

Sadly, he's in no position to pretend that these tax evasion charges don't exist and there is a nasty possibility that he could do a second stretch in jail.

MICK FARREN

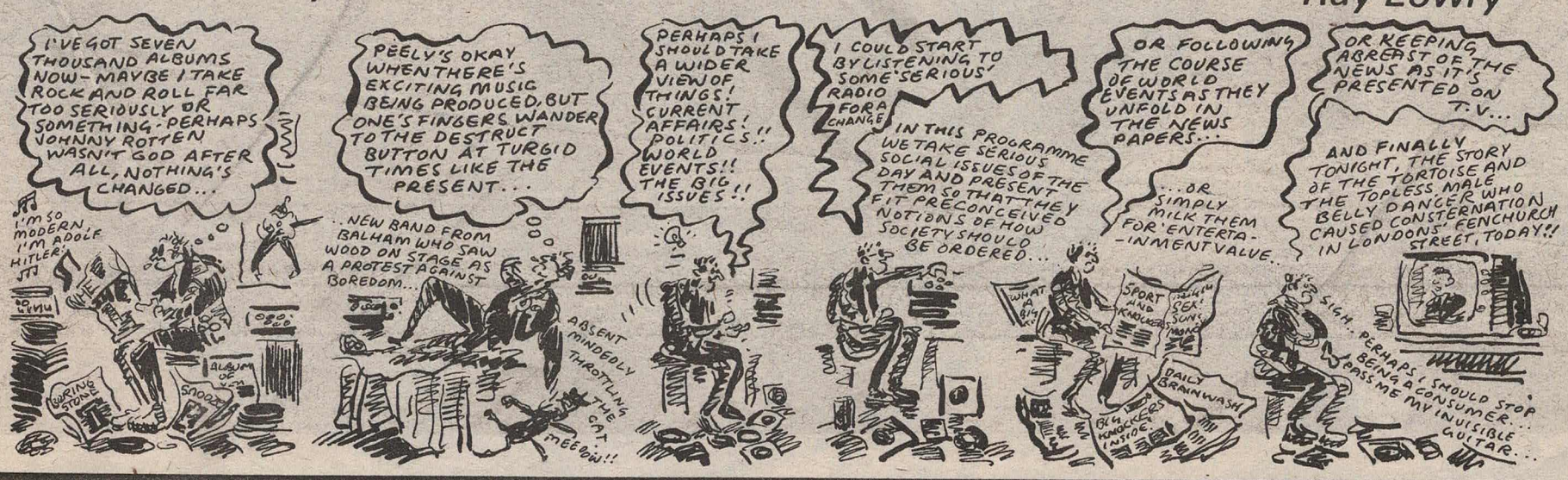
THRILLS

THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY OF HEALING
(Interdenominational)
REV. M. McLAREN
'Wholeness: Renewal'
THURSDAY, 7th JUNE
at 7.30 pm
MARTYRS & NORTH CHURCH
(Westburn Square)
All interested invited

At last Malcom's comeback!

From the Greenock Telegraph
Sent by Chris Davidson

Not only Rock'n'Roll — Ray Lowry


I'VE GOT SEVEN THOUSAND ALBUMS NOW - MAYBE I TAKE ROCK AND ROLL FAR TOO SERIOUSLY OR SOMETHING - PERHAPS JOHNNY ROTTEN WASN'T GOD AFTER ALL, NOTHING'S CHANGED...
I'M SO MODERN, I'M ADOLF HITLER!
ROLLING STONE
ALBUM OF THE SNOOZE
PEELY'S OKAY WHEN THERE'S EXCITING MUSIC BEING PRODUCED, BUT ONE'S FINGERS WANDER TO THE DESTRUCT BUTTON AT TURGID TIMES LIKE THE PRESENT...
NEW BAND FROM BALHAM WHO SAW WOOD ON STAGE AS A PROTEST AGAINST BOREDOM...
ABSENT MINDEDLY THROTTLING THE CAT
MEEOW!!
PERHAPS I SHOULD TAKE A WIDER VIEW OF THINGS! CURRENT AFFAIRS! POLITICS!! WORLD EVENTS!! THE BIG ISSUES!!
I COULD START BY LISTENING TO SOME 'SERIOUS' RADIO FOR A CHANGE
IN THIS PROGRAMME WE TAKE SERIOUS SOCIAL ISSUES OF THE DAY AND PRESENT THEM SO THAT THEY FIT PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS OF HOW SOCIETY SHOULD BE ORDERED...
OR FOLLOWING THE COURSE OF WORLD EVENTS AS THEY UNFOLD IN THE NEWS PAPERS...
...OR SIMPLY MILK THEM FOR 'ENTERTA-INMENT VALUE.
WHAT A BIG!
SPORT AND KNICKERS
DAILY BRAINWASH
BIG KNOCKERS IN JOE
OR KEEPING ABREAST OF THE NEWS AS IT'S PRESENTED ON T.V...
AND FINALLY TONIGHT, THE STORY OF THE TORTOISE AND THE TOPLESS, MALE BELLY DANCER WHO CAUSED CONSTERNATION IN LONDONS' FENCHURCH STREET, TODAY!!
SIGH. PERHAPS I SHOULD STOP BEING A CONSUMER... PASS ME MY INVISIBLE GUITAR...

CHINESE ROCKS

AFTER MANY YEARS of imposing a blanket ban on Western entertainment, The People's Republic of China is now moving at full speed into the modern age.

The two state-owned recording companies, Oriental Magnetic and China Record, recently ordered three multi-track recording studios equipped with more than $500,000 worth of hardware, plus two tape duplicating systems which cost a further $250,000.

Don't step on Mao blue suede shoes

John Bishop, general manager of the hardware firm who spent a year negotiating these deals, commented: "The Chinese are becoming more aware of Western music and consequently the advantage of having sophisticated recording equipment in order to sell more of their own music domestically and possibly abroad.

"China is loosening up; there is a great interest in the arts. Western classical music — Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Mozart — is now being played in the schools, and our engineers report that the Chinese are very interested in dance music. There is definitely a record-buying public in China."

The Bee Gees have been invited to perform in Peking and a spokesman for the Chinese embassy in Washington told *Rolling Stone's* Robert Wallace: "The new studios will probably be used to record your own music, but perhaps some day a group such as your Rolling Stones will be able to record in Peking."

Western film companies are also looking for China to be a hot new market in years to come.

There are two state film companies, China Film Corp and Great Wall Movie Enterprises, who last year produced some 40 films in the 13 studios in China.

There are, however, 4000 cinemas, many showing five or six films a day, and increasingly the Chinese are looking to the West to supply extra product.

Convoy and *Futureworld* are two movies recently screened there and the Chinese are currently investigating the possibilities of getting *Star Wars, Superman* and the James Bond films.

They seem anxious to get hold of Walt Disney cartoons but love stories, sex and nudity are still out of bounds.

Television is another big growth area. There are an estimated 3 million TV sets in the country, and history was made in early March when the first TV commercial was seen. It featured members of a popular men's basketball team promoting 'Happiness Cola.'

Recent population estimates put the number of Chinese at over one billion, a quarter of the world's population. No wonder many Western entertainment companies are currently rubbing their hands at the profit possibilities.

DICK TRACY

THRILLS

LOWRY

"Oh come on, Doc! When did my youthful high spirits suddenly become senile dementia?"

Back In The USA

By MICK FARREN

WITH THE temperatures soaring into the 90's there's a certain air of madness running through the grimy air of New York City. The weather may be a freak, but the atmosphere of craziness is always there.

You have only to walk down the street to feel it. On the sidewalk, there are just too many people with eyes that are a little too wide, a little too fixed and a little too staring.

Compared with other major cities, New York has more than its fair share of derelicts, not only the usual recognisable bums and winos, but also a strange, almost unique kind of misfit who, seemingly unable to cope with the world as it is, has retreated into a pathetic fantasy world as a desperate try for self protection.

A middle-aged, black man sits on the sidewalk of Fifth Avenue, right in the prestigious shopping area of midtown Manhattan. Beside him is a carrier bag stuffed with garbage and a black and white pet rabbit. And all the supposedly normal people bustle past, not quite looking at either man or rabbit. It's almost as though nobody quite wants to imagine what's going on in his head.

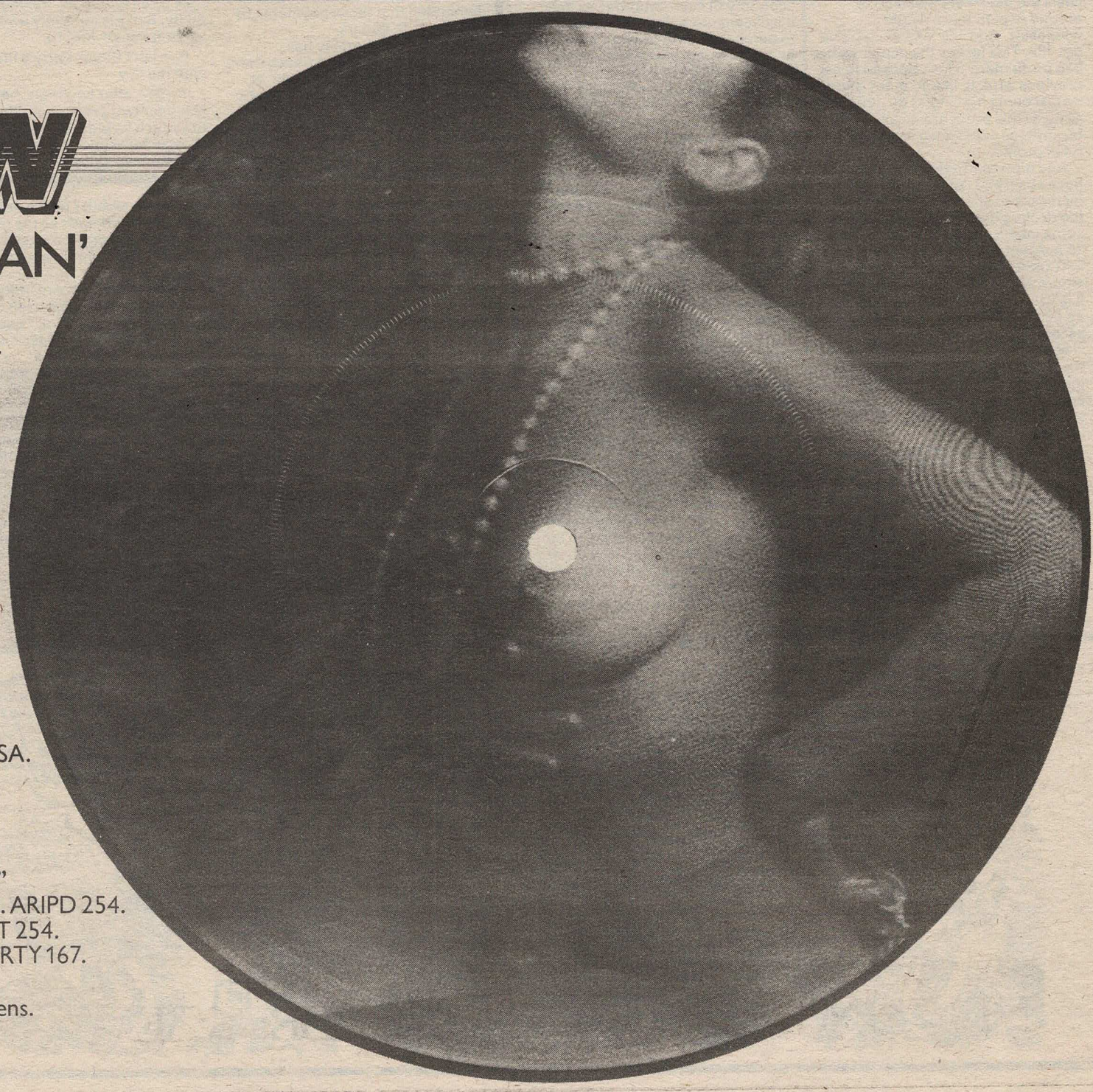
The black man with the rabbit is

TYCOON

'SUCH A WOMAN'

The Debut Single.

Available in Limited Edition Picture Disc.



TYCOON ARE TAKING OVER THE USA.
with a
Top 30 Single
and a
Top 50 Debut Album.
Out Now: The single, "Such A Woman"
Available in Limited Edition Picture Disc. ARIPD 254.
and in Limited Edition Special Bag. ARIST 254.
Edited from the Album: "TYCOON" ARTY 167.
Produced by Robert John Lange.
When he's involved, the rock world listens.

ARISTA

THE VERY LIFE THAT NOW I PLEDGE TO YOU!
YOUR WORDS ARE TRUE! I KNOW IT NOW!
BUT IT CAN NEVER BE! I'LL NOT ABANDON MAN!
THEN FIGHT BELOVED--
WITH DEBBIE EVER AT YOUR SIDE!
KNOWING IT CAN ONLY END IN DEATH?
AHH, BUT WE WILL DIE TOGETHER!
LIFELESS WAS I ONCE! SO SHALL I BE AGAIN!

WITH APOLOGIES to Stan Lee and Debbie Harry, Thrills presents the first and perhaps also the last in a series of cross-cultural mutations you'd always dreamt about but thought would never happen.

The Silver Surfer, Marvel's spaceborn ultimate superhero, doomed to wander forever in the foolish and inequitous world of mortals, finds a fleeting moment of respite in the arms of the chart-topping platinum chanteuse.

Our thanks to the very wonderful all-purpose pop media zine, Heat, from which the strip — lovingly rendered by Pat Browne from a page in the recent Stan Lee / Jack Kirby Surfer special — was taken.

Heat costs 30p and the address is 10 Dodder Park Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, Ireland. Get it today. Don't delay.

no isolated case. All over the city you can see the phenomenon known as 'the shopping bag lady' — junk heap people who have lost the strength, or maybe just the desire, to maintain the necessary vice-like grip on capitalism's high speed, terminal roundabout.

They let go and fly off, still clutching a few shards of freedom's basic motivation: possessions will protect you from the apocalypse.

Of course the shopping bag ladies can't get their hands on the real stuff. This is the prerogative of the elite bearers of the plastic credit card, or the more plebeian folding green. They have to make do with everyone else's cast offs.

With patient dedication, these frail ladies tote huge garbage bags

Mama . . .

or shopping carriers crammed with empty bottles that you can't even get twopence back on, carefully folded breadwrappers, lengths of string, used tinfoil, a discarded shoe.

Their faith in property has reached the distant areas normally reserved for the flagelant and the religious fanatic. All the debris of the modern world, the stuff that the rest of us threw away, has become their personal burden and hope for salvation.

The buildings go up and the subway goes down, and if you go down far enough you reach the grim depths, maybe the real heart of the city, where the winos and the shopping bag ladies play.

They're . . .

In these bleak, broken, shadowy places the feared predator is the child, or, more precisely, gangs of unattached, uncontrollable children who roam the subways and the twilight zone of derelict and burned-out blocks.

Setting fire to a drunk, or pushing a senior citizen under an onrushing subway train (don't stand too near the edge, dear) are these kids' ideas of a fun time in fun city.

Two weeks ago, *New York* magazine estimated that there were some 17,000 disturbed, violent and totally uneducatable children below the age of 14, roaming the city. Many of them were ante-nataly brain damaged by Momma's heroin

All . . .

habit during the great smack spree of the '60s.

For too many of them the only hope of survival in the Big Apple is to band together in mutually protective gangs that mature into the kind that are now getting romanticised in movies like *Warriors*.

O yeah, the craziness also extends to the media. Even criminals get to be stars in these times.

Current fave is a lady called Nancy Santana. Ms. Santana, a slim, well groomed and very beautiful Hispanic (Faye Dunaway could play her in dark make-up when they make the movie) lady took to robbing banks in order to support a $1,500 a day smack habit and to send her son to private school so he'd have a chance in life.

Her modus operandi was the first thing to catch the public imagination. She'd walk into a bank with a pound or so of gelignite concealed in a neatly elegant shoulder bag. Almost apologetically, she'd inform the teller that she should be given all their money, otherwise she'd be forced to blow up the bank, taking out herself and everyone else in the place.

Eventually, Nancy slipped up and

Crazy . . .

got herself caught. She was released on bail, and, to everyone's surprise, appeared to go straight back to work. Within less than a month of her return to the street, another bank job went down, conducted in the highly personal Santana manner.

Nancy, however, claimed that it simply wasn't she. She even went so far as to call a press conference to point out to the world that, not only had it not been she on the job at the most recent robbery, but, even worse than that, somebody was having the gall to rip off her act.

One's act is a thing that, in New York, needs to be jealously protected. Without it, you fall to the level of the innocent bystander. An

Here . . .

innocent bystander is only a step away from a victim, and only the super-perverted want to be victims.

This kind of attitude turns a hot night in Manhattan into a shrieking costume party in which friend, foe, potential partner of Mr. Goodbar are recognised by the disguise rather than by any real empathy. (Wear your keys on your belt in the wrong leather bar and, little man, you really will have a busy day).

The New York costume party has become so highly developed that it even has to be regulated.

Following in the tinsel wake of Studio 54, almost any nightclub that thinks it can get away with it now operates an admission policy that includes a gorilla on the door making arbitrary decisions as to who is cute enough to be allowed to go in and spend their money on overpriced booze.

If you're not beautiful then you'd better be rich, and if you can't make either, then get famous. Otherwise, forget it. The winos and the shooping bag ladies are waiting . . . them or the wild children.

And that, very, very briefly, is the New York gavotte. It goes round and round and God help those who get giddy and crack under the strain.

They'll do anything to beat the Reaper here. Qusting the pure, whole, natural and organic, they jog, they run, they bike, they exercise, taking laboured breaths of air that is so polluted that I wouldn't, if I could help it, take a lungfull with the lungs of someone I didn't like.

Yes, mother, they're all crazy here and I'm right in the middle of them.

THRILLS

WIRE

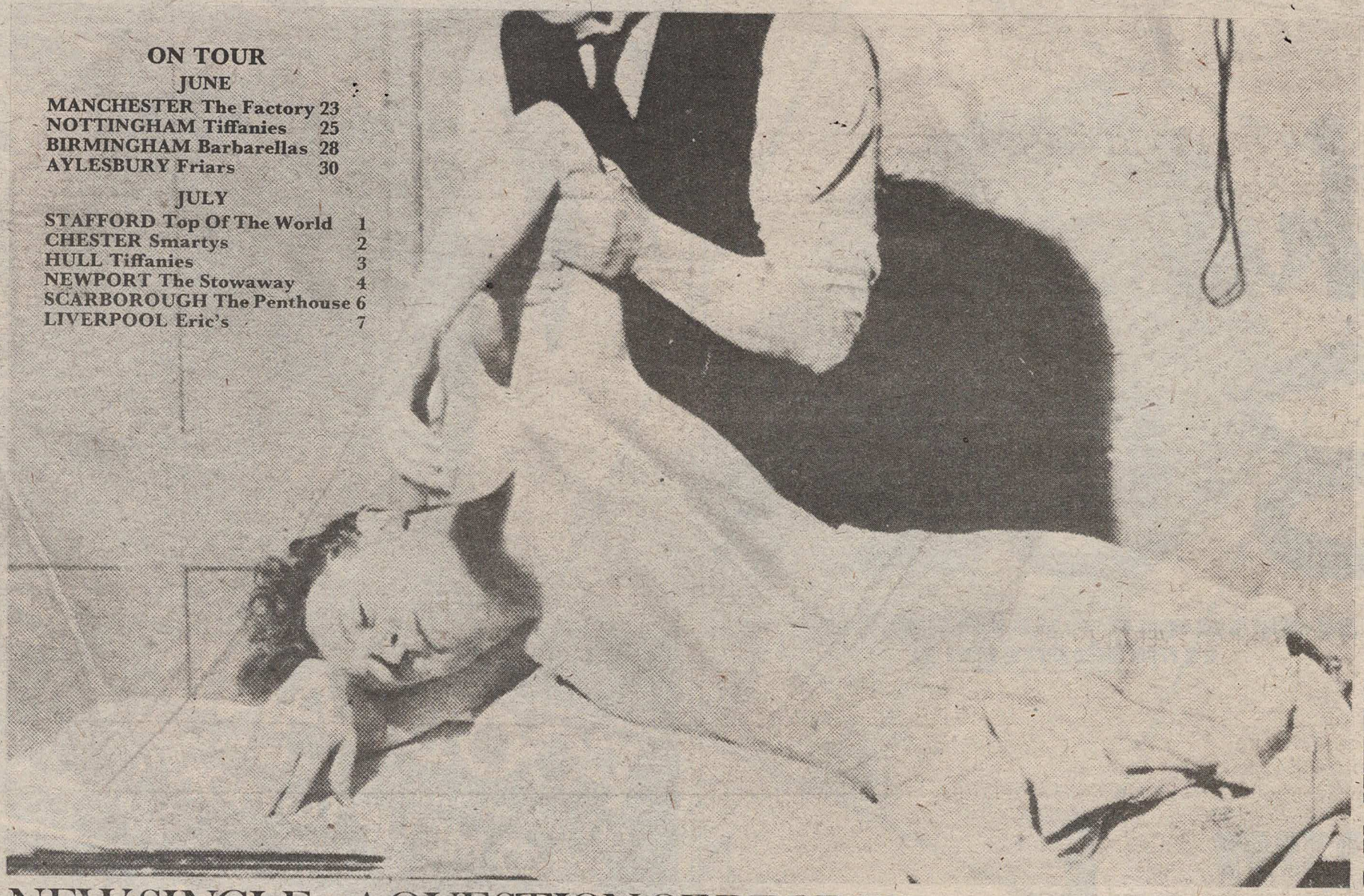
ON TOUR

JUNE

MANCHESTER The Factory 23
NOTTINGHAM Tiffanies 25
BIRMINGHAM Barbarellas 28
AYLESBURY Friars 30

JULY

STAFFORD Top Of The World 1
CHESTER Smartys 2
HULL Tiffanies 3
NEWPORT The Stowaway 4
SCARBOROUGH The Penthouse 6
LIVERPOOL Eric's 7



NEW SINGLE: A QUESTION OF DEGREE HAR 5187

HARVEST

LIMITED EDITION PICTURE SLEEVE

If you thought all politicians were sick — here's the proof

THE SOMETIMES erratic behaviour of world leaders could now find an explanation, thanks to a pioneering work by Pierre Rentchnick, a Swiss physician and author of a book entitled Those Sick Who Govern Us.

In the book, a French best-seller for 15 weeks but not yet translated into English, Rentchnick recounts in detail the illnesses of 28 leading statesmen and claims that, all too often, heads of state ignore or cover up their bad state of health. "We would not let passengers on a plane whose pilot may have a heart attack," he says . . .

He claims that Franklin D. Roosevelt at the Yalta Conference in February 1945 was suffering from an advanced state of hardening of the arteries of the brain and was close to death. (He, in fact, died just two months later). Rentchnick believed it was a mistake for Roosevelt to preside at the conference and points out that his personal physician was an ear, nose and throat specialist.

Stalin died of a brain hemorrhage after refusing his 10 doctors' advice to cut down on alcohol, tobacco and coffee. President Kennedy suffered from Addison's disease, a severe sickness of the ardrenal glands. For this he had to take cortisone, which Rentchnick claims was not as pure as it is today, and produced a wide range of physical side effects.

Jimmy Carter, it appears, suffers from hermorrhoids.

President Pompidou, who died in office in 1974, was in fact suffering from a rare blood disease called the Waldenstrom syndrome; officially it was claimed he had the grippe.

President Tito is very ill apparently, and has had two heart attacks already. Tito's physician, whom Rentchnick met in Geneva, had to sign a paper not to leave Yugoslavia for five years and not to speak about Tito's health. Tito is now followed everywhere by a Cardimobile in case of another attack, and can only concentrate for about two hours a day.

Like Brezhnev, he is a symbol of power that must be maintained. Brezhnev is very sick, having had six or seven heart attacks in addition to arteriosclerosis of the brain. He is believed to wear a heart pacemaker.

The list goes on. Prime Minister Begin of Israel has serious heart disease and has had three heart attacks. Golda Meir had a type of Hodgkin's disease while she was in office. Idi Amin, according to Israeli army doctors, suffers from the nervous complications of syphilis.

Rentchnik also claims that Adolf Hitler showed symptoms of Parkinson's disease while Winston Churchill had manic depressive moods during the war which he cured with overdoses of alcohol. He had been very sick with brain apoplexy but became head of the British government and refused to resign.

Rentchnick believes that "these important politicians should not be examined by their own physicians but instead by other renowned doctors who are not interested in politics." His evidence certainly gives us a new perspective on the events of recent history.

A DOCTOR

Winston, Frank and Joe sitting in the surgery waiting for their medicine.

THRILLS

Benyon

Jake Burns it up. Pic: Virginia Turbett.

Fifty minutes over Belfast — Punk testifies on celluloid

FOR THE *NO-FUTURE* generation of Northern Irish kids, punk isn't just a pastime.

In a country which for centuries has been divided by outmoded social traditions, taboos and bloody vendettas, the kids are now openly attempting to stop sectarianism at grass roots level. And with a degree of success.

This is the underlying theme of *Shell Shock Rock* — a brave little 50-minute movie made around Belfast at the end of last year by John T. Davis (see *Thrills*, Jan 20th, '79) and featuring: Stiff Little Fingers, The Undertones, Rudi, The Outcasts, The Idiots, Protex, The Parasites, The Victims and Rhesus Negative.

Financed by a £2,500 Community Arts Council grant, a grand of Davis's own money, plus time, effort and technical skills donated free of a group of like-minded people, *Shell Shock Rock* examines the rapid growth of the Belfast music scene. It may have been shot on a shoe-string, but Davis's professional ability and his obvious empathy with

JULY 6th. 1979

the B-52's

First copies in the shops include original ROCK LOBSTER single
It's Free-Make sure of yours

ISLAND
LEAVING THE SEVENTIES BEHIND

FOODBAND
DLT makes a meal of the tasty single
'SEND ME UP TO MONA'
12" picture bag LWOT 32 with bonus track "Running Through The Alley"
7" picture disc WOT PX 32 7" black vinyl WOT 32
RECORDS GROUP

the subject matter more than compensates for any shortcomings.

Whereas, in this country, even the most volatile punk rhetotic could, with few exceptions, be absorbed and exploited by the establishment which it attacked without causing empires to fall — in Ulster its effectiveness could prove more direct and widespread.

Seeing as various political extremists have already attempted to pressurise various punk bands to keep their opinions to themselves, Davis admits that there was some footage that he couldn't morally incorporate into the finished print. This wasn't a cop-out, but a precaution. For in such troubled times retribution can be lethal.

One band, whom Davis refuses to name, have already been held at gunpoint because of their outspoken views on sectarianism. "They're frightened that their little world is going to be forgotten about and that people will stop killing each other," said Davis of these political extremists.

Indeed, in one backstage sequence, Stiff Little Fingers nervously admit that following the release of 'Suspect Device', they spent the next couple of weeks jumping at shadows and constantly looking over their leather-clad shoulders.

Surprisingly enough, Stiff Little Fingers, relates Davis, are not terribly liked by the majority of integrated Belfast punks, because of their overt political stance. The consensus of opinion being that the kids don't need to be persistently reminded of what's going on in blood-soaked streets; the music should be used to foster kinship and not for re-opening festering wounds.

Unlike the majority of *verite* punk pix, *Shell Shock Rock* can't be catagorised as exploitative voyeurism, but as a community service. Throughout, Davis vividly captures the enthusiasm and sense of commitment of even the most self-conscious bands. The camera, work is, at times, almost claustrophobic as it evokes the atmosphere of the non-sectarian Harp Bar, the Pound Club, and various youth clubs and recording studios where much of the action has been filmed.

Though guaranteed a screening at the forthcoming Cork Film Festival, the future of *Shell Shock Rock* is uncertain. For the time being, it will be confined to showings around various Northern Ireland community centres because, according to the maker, "they see a desperate need to show the drastically changing attitude of these kids and the fact that they will no longer tolorate what's happening on the streets."

Perhaps, just for once, rock will go some way towards honouring its social commitment.

ROY CARR

THRILLS

Gays walk tall

THE BIGGEST gay celebration ever seen outside the USA takes place in Britain next week: Gay Pride Wee 1979.

Among the hundreds of events planned in London and elsewhere, Tom Robinson is set to play five nights at the Collegiate Theatre, and the week climaxes with a massive carnival in Hyde Park where disco darling Sylvester will be making a special appearance.

This year Gay Pride Week is especially significant because it marks the tenth anniversary of New York's Stonewall riots — the incidents of June 27/29 1969 which are generally considered to mark the beginning of the gay liberation movement. During a routine raid on the Stonewall bar, queen-bashing cops were astonished to meet actual physical resistance which rapidly turned into a full scale riot. It was a display of pride which permanently altered the way homosexuals saw themselves: victims no more. (A full account of Stonewall appears in the current *Gay News.*

As for this year's Gay Pride Week, events to note include:

- Mon 25 — Fri 29: Tom Robinson plus selected musicians nightly at the Collegiate Theatre, 15 Gordon St WC1 at 10.30 pm, featuring mostly unrecorded material and likely star guests.
- Sat 30: Hyde Park Carnival. Guest appearance by Tom Robinson and Sylvester, live shows by Spoilsports and Ova.
- Plus a week long gay film festival at the Scala, Tottenham Court Rd, and literally hundreds of other events.

Full details in the Gay Pride Week programme, 40p from sensible newsagents or direct (plus 12p P&P) from GPW, 5 Caledonia Road, London N1 (01 278 5670).

PHIL McNEILL

Bomp - bomp - a - loo - bomp - a -lom -bam - bing! (?)

NOW HEAR THIS! You see before you the fruits of many months arduous devotion to the cause. Bomp Books and Greg Shaw, those trustworthy purveyors of titillating terpsichorean trivia, have sat down and compiled a compleat discography of English and European New Wave, singles, albums, labels and inside leg measurements. It's an exhaustive account of the years 1975-1978 whose only competitor, as far as we know, is the equally useful *Zig Zag* guide to small labels.

The first edition is limited to 1,000 copies (as befits the genre), but if you're the sort who can't sleep without knowing the matrix number of The Duggie Briggs Band's 'Punk Rockin' Granny', or the alternative versions of Elvis Costello's 'Alison' single, then write to Bomp Books, PO Box 7112, Burbank CA 91510 or get your local hip book shop to do the dirty work for you.

THRILLS

The Lone Groover — *Benyon*

HIYA JINXO! MAGNIFICO FABRICS DRAPED 'ROUND TH' SUBTLE CURVES OF YOR BOD.
SURE TING GROOFER-I GOT US ARMY FATIGUE TROUSERS, GERMAN OFFICERS TUNIC, ER, UGANDAN ARMY 'IDI' VEST.
DUTCH RIOT POLICE BOOTS, ER, AN' DESE DUAL PURPOSE GLOVES THAT SERVE AS A GAS MASK.
HMM, I HEAR Y'VE CUT A SINGLE.
YUP!
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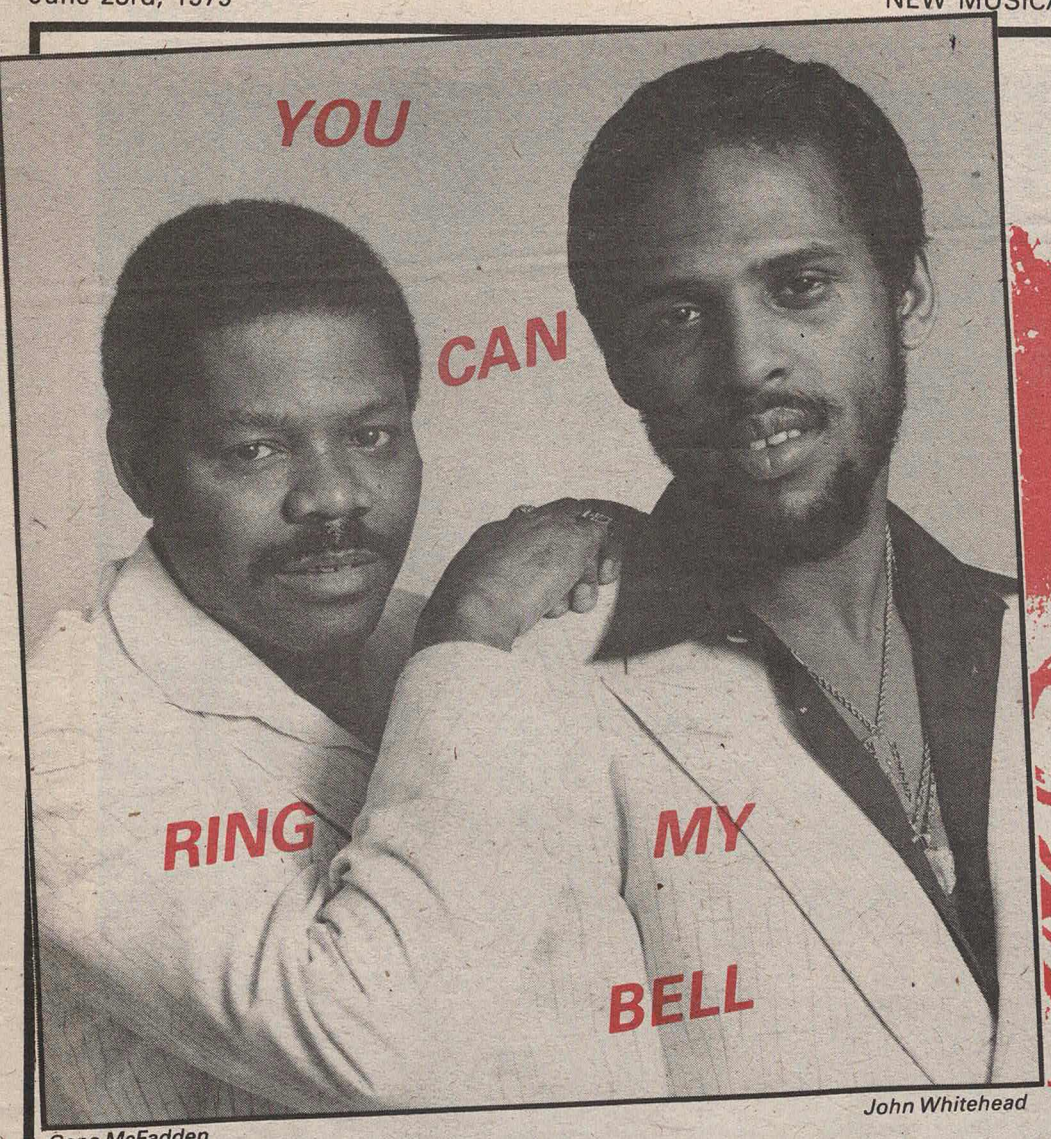
Van Halen on tour. They'll raise the dead.

Monday, June 25, Birmingham, Odeon
Tuesday, June 26, Newcastle City Hall
Wednesday, June 27, Manchester, Apollo
Thursday, June 28, Rainbow Theatre, London
Friday, June 29, Rainbow Theatre, London

The new album Van Halen II is available on Warner Brothers records K56616.
Also available on cassette K456616.

Special Guests St. Paradise.



Gene McFadden John Whitehead

Anita Ward

The Rise And Rise Of McFadden, Whitehead And Ward (Anita)

EVEN THE Johnny Pearson Orchestra on *Top Of The Pops* couldn't ruin a song as strong as 'Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now'.

Up there two men celebrate their work, twisting and punching, crouching down low, like Al Green and Bobby Bland they dance — they love that song and 'routine' is not the word for their gyrations.

Playing Al Green and handling the verses is John Whitehead. Slightly overweight and playing Bobby Bland is Gene McFadden.

Even if you don't own this, their first single, chances are you have one of their works. Say, 'Backstabbers' by The O'Jays or 'Wake Up Everybody' by Harold Melvin, both works of true classic status.

The Montcalm Hotel is well known by now as the Pop Star's retreat. Walking in the door you sink to your chin in brown carpet and figure you could get nicked for not pronouncing your T's propertly. The reception informs you where your party is located and you can't help but think that he reckons you're a shitleg for calling him "mate". Just when you feel that the lift is never gonna move, *POW!*, the door swishes back and the lobby has been replaced by a corridor.

Inside room 112 sits a fit black bloke in a cowboy had and jeans. On the low desk is an enormous portable cassette machine and it's playing 'Aint No Stoppin' Us Now' right at the acapella part. John Whitehead is on his toes and begins crooning at me.

"No starpin — no starpin — they'll be no starrpin. Say no starpin, they'll be no ho ho starp Gardyarl ..."

"You really love that song a lot, dontcha?" I ask him.

"Ma mayn," he says laying back into the velvet sofa and closing his eyes, "ain't but one sawng I lahk better than that toon."

The room has a spiral staircase at one end and upstairs is Gene McFadden — who's doing another interview. At regular intervals, one or the other dashes to his respective end of the stairs and peels off some spritz — unintelligible to these ears — which causes the pair no end of tickled ribs. And when Whitehead laughs he doubles up and *hawhaws* like the salute from the Woolwich Ferry.

I've been here for about five minutes and got nowhere with all the thigh slapping and jive talking flying about.

"Are you crazy?" I venture good heartedly.

"I'm sorry man," comes back my half, wiping his right eye, "you gotta understand that this is the real break out for me an' that guy. It's *us* now y'dig? It's our show and we're a success with this world, *alright!*"

And do you know what? He's not a prat for all that. This man really is flying high on his music — not conceit mind you — he is purely and outrageously HAPPY. (Incidentally he's swigging Pepsi and shows no signs of brushing with snuff.) I laugh politely whenever I reckon he's just finished a crack but his 'dudeish' accent is very thick indeed — like Charlie Murray when he's under the Pils.

I mention that it seems as if Philadelphia International, one of that ever-shrinking band of 'black' labels with a definite sound, is coming back again with a real mean temper after what, in the UK at least, was a lull in the hits department. But John denies that there has been a slump at all — and moreover he doesn't see that Philly is so special insofar as this 'sound' goes. He goes on to fill in the origin of it all.

"It was just Gamble and Huff and all these labels — uh, Gamble and Dion and NorthBay — that tied up in this one operation, which until CBS gave us distribution had to lie unused. And we wrote 'Backstabbers' for O'Jays for the first release and since then we ain't never had no slack time."

The pair have been together since infancy and tried to get a singing act together shortly after they found themselves jobless when Otis Redding died and therefore had little use for his back-up band, of which John and Gene it seems were a part. They went out and died themselves, in a less permanent way obviously, and ever since have been strictly backroom hands whilst people went platimun on their songs and their production.

"We used to go up and see Gamble and plead for a chance to get out there, but we wanted them to pay for it. But they'd always remind us that we'd died once and should have learned from that. Until now!"

I ponder whether they despair at the lack of actual 'soul' singers these days — and cop an almost frightening answer.

"Well, y'see I feel that there *is* as much soul around today as ever. Y'got someone like Billy Joel who..."

Billy Joel?

"Uh huh, sure. Look, soul music is only some guy singing his songs. I know you folks believe it's some cat with all gravel in his voice an' stuff singin' 'bout hard times but that ain't soul music. Most of those guys were singing someone else's songs so how'n'hell can he be feelin' soul? No — soul music, man, is any cat who feels enough to sing what he wrote himself. Otis sang soul sure nuff, but Billy Joel got soul too."

So now you know. But just listen to the reverse side of the single. It's a song called 'Got The Love' and it comes straight from Otis Redding's grave: a funky horn-driven twist to stand side by side with Stax, Mojo and anything you care to name. An album of such numbers could whip the arse off any Blues Brother whippet.

Our talk remains pleasant but unrevealing. Two guys financially very secure who just wanted to do it themselves, and are high on the bet paying off — that's the only picture of McFadden and Whitehead right now. John talks a lot about the words of the single, summing up their struggle to free themselves of the yolk of being backroom, but surely the lyric is just their personal icing on a great hit single.

AND THE next day I'm back to this velvet volt for a meeting with another new arrival in our wonderful country — our Number One artist Ms Anita Ward.

Unfortunately a tight schedule — that is fifty broad grins and a few words in 45 minutes — coupled with company cock-ups result in nobody being home.

Still, it's time I — we — learned that US unknowns who burst upon our lives in a flurry of pop music are invariably just as straightforwards as their music. Their worn may excite me to lunatic pitches but they're usually too caught up on the whistle-stop conveyer belt of personal appearances to do much but smile and be nice.

So — Anita Ward. Facts: Anita Ward is from Memphis Tennessee, she is 21 and 'Ring My Bell' is her very first single ever. Her 'discoverer' and all-round bossman is Freddie Knight of TK (Miami) label. And she had problems with the higher notes on *TOTP*. Johnny Pearson is 83.

DANNY BAKER

THRILLS

Benyon

So I said, "There's no way I'd wear a Parka, John theyre like bleedin' uniforms."

HIGH NOON FOR DEAD DUKE PRODUCT

JUNE IS bustin' out all over with John Wayne tribute 45 product. The 'dead Duke' flow is easily the most massive display of celebrity praising product so far this year, with no fewer than five tributes to date.

Take 'The Duke', for instance, by Dean Charles & The Cowboy Blues Band, on Major Bill Smith's Fort Worth-based Le Cam records:

"All the little doggies will walk away in the sunset / And that old cowboy moon just won't come up at all / Even the black hats will hang in rows on the church fence / The day that the Duke makes his last draw."

Or Wayne Jerred's 'The Super Cowboy' — *"I wouldn't watch a show unless the star was ole John Wayne / He's a bad gunfighter and a straight do-righter"* — which was first released last year before Big J.'s final duel with cancer.

The Kimberleys' 'God Bless John Wayne' strings together titles of the actor's best-known movies, whilst Paul Ott's 'A Salute To The Duke' is just that, and is being released by Elektra / Asylum for its sins.

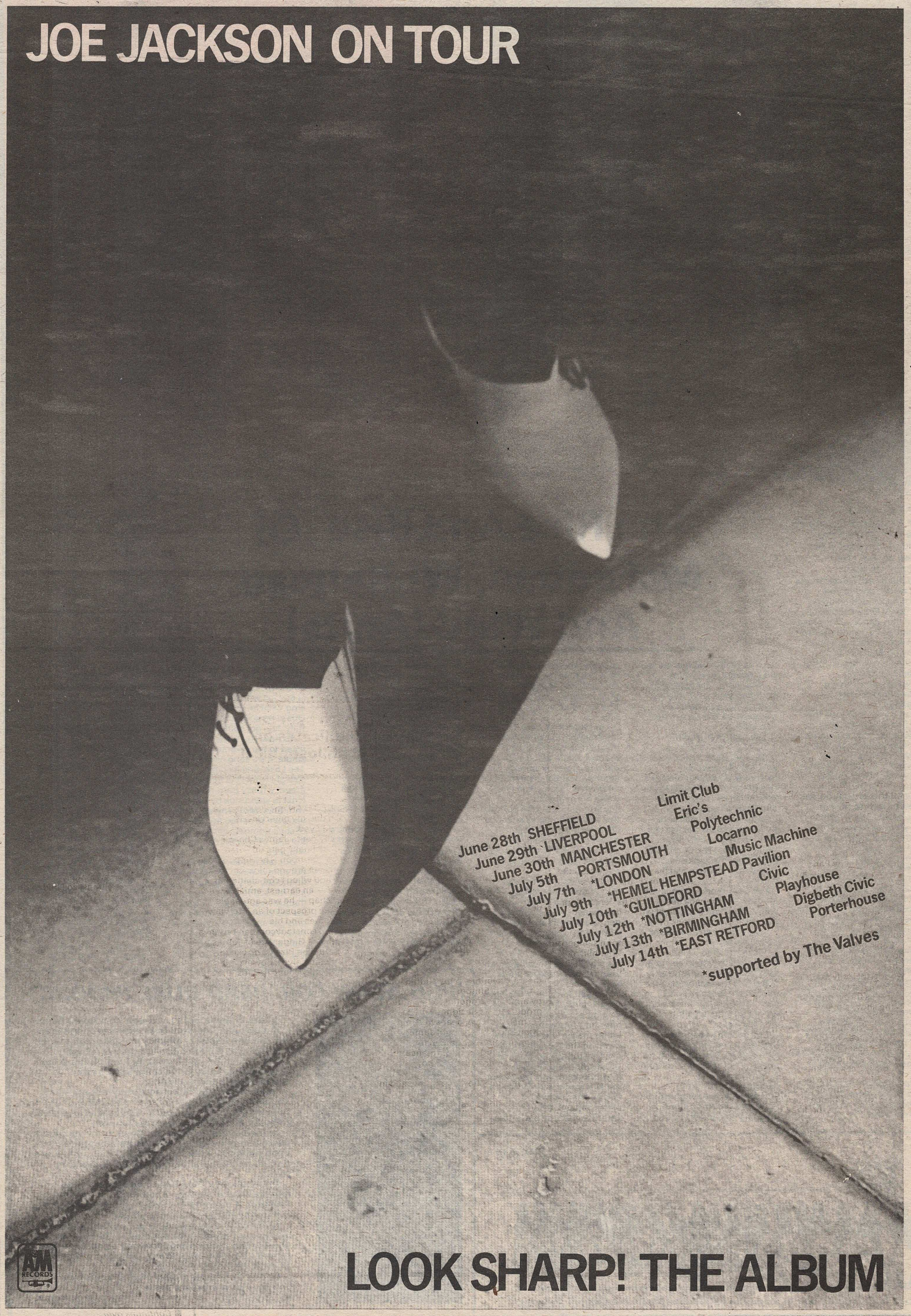
All-American eulogy goes, er, ape on Debbie Ettell's new release, which backs 'Big Duke — The Man' with 'Brother Billy', a tune about President Carter's brother, himself a hit longgone with Billy Lemmon's 1977 Ariola chart hit 'Six Packs A Day'.

Product by or about Richard Pryor is temporarily unscheduled, a late report reads ...

BILL BOARD

THEEND

JOE JACKSON ON TOUR



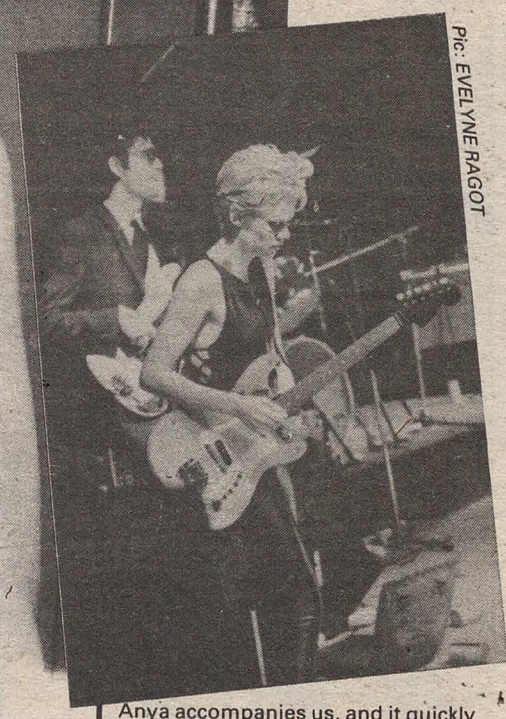
June 28th SHEFFIELD Limit Club
June 29th LIVERPOOL Eric's
June 30th MANCHESTER Polytechnic
July 5th PORTSMOUTH Locarno
July 7th *LONDON Music Machine
July 9th *HEMEL HEMPSTEAD Pavilion
July 10th *GUILDFORD Civic
July 12th *NOTTINGHAM Playhouse
July 13th *BIRMINGHAM Digbeth Civic
July 14th *EAST RETFORD Porterhouse

*supported by The Valves

A&M RECORDS

LOOK SHARP! THE ALBUM

Pic: EVELYNE RAGOT



Pic: EVELYNE RAGOT

Left and above: JAMES CHANCE. Right: A CONTORTION

JAMES WHITE AND THE REDS

A comparitive study (sort of) of aggressive American nihilism and French anarchists with beer cans. IAN PENMAN adjudicates on matters moral and philosophical.

A CAMPHOR SPLINT of polished alto and a cocaine glare on ice, uptown and into full solipse: James Chance, hair slicked, stare burning, his palms pulling tantrums from that sax.

He is *just right.* Scat-the-dots, jutting out all these flippant mannerisms, cold sealed poses, all this shit. A native New Yorker. A Fred Astaire on Richard Hell; he's . . . *almost* . . . black. He's . . . *hip!* I've-got-soul-and-I'm-suuuuuuuuperbad!

A strange character to find in the Hippodrome de Paris, this rheumy old circus pavilion — an ornament in the old-fashioned public entertainment discourse.

Inside, James Chance and The Contortions get going, a little bit, before the anarchists in the French audience intervene.

Cans, bottles, a soda syphon rain down — belligerent youth. James Chance turns tail like some wonderful Hollywood prima donna, and will not take it: "Look, if these assholes throw one more can, that's it, the show's *over.*"

The show goes on. The four Contortions' funk, Chance's frigidly blown notes, the featureless arc of sharp creases, blank eyes, harsh rhythmic spindles, the whole business goes on, and off, and on.

The bouncers are inept, and the clottish front-line of the audience close around Chance like a big paw; the mercury rises, bodies scuffle, arms swing, objects scythe, gates fall over, and a mystery hippie starts playing his own sax. I don't blink too much.

The 'violence' is comparatively lame: obviously calculated, Continental gesticulation meets American method brawling; 1977 (or 1979) was a very good year for worse than this in the UK.

The 'threat' posed (sic) by James Chance isn't obvious like its British counterpart — especially if you place him on a native landscape. 'Threatening' live performance is determined locally, or nationally, and the media (or group's management) take it from there. The UK perspective on 'violence' associated with live performance is going to be substantially different from another country's. (Who knows how the Hippodrome would take to a particularly petulant Ari Up, or homesick Mark Smith . . .)

JAMES CHANCE and The Contortions, and/or James White and The Blacks developed in New York. They are basically the same thing twice, an organism divided for survival purposes along the lines of Chance's hero George Clinton and his Funkadeliconglomerate.

The Contortions started in December 1977, before which Chance had played jazz. They landed a four-track spot on the 'No New York' compilation album along with Teenage Jesus and The Jerks, Mars and DNA, all of whom had gained reputations of varying degrees of trash and power.

The big thing in common seemed to be a kind of aggressive nihilism; but between late '77 and early '79 it was difficult to pick anything very definite out of the New York space, full as it was of so many ageing celebrities being documented by ageing writers.

The import records from the newer groups *implied* rather than stated. With Teenage Jesus, or The Contortions, the angle seemed to be: take traditional rock and roll structure and lyrics, and dismantle. Only, unlike navvies such as The Ramones, or Blondie, or Lowe/Edmunds, tradition wasn't put back together again; these people were *young,* and only all those old hipsters in the rock press dug that 'tradition' con game.

Musically introductions and conclusions were lost, records were a constant middle-eight; lyrical concerns were pointedly unfamiliar, a different R'n'R language. These groups were inflicting wounds on the tired old corpse, dismembering it, and weren't crying wolf back to big record companies. No methodical 'mystery', no long guitar noises, no shining lights in the audience's eyes . . .

The difficult thing was to fathom their motivations. Why should four groups risk lumpen-categorisation by appearing together on an album produced and designed by The Formalist's Fave, dear sweet old Brian Eno? Why should James Chance gain a reputation for 'outrageous' live performances, for petty violence, malice, and obstinacy?

Well, that's how I got interested in James Chance.

Here's how I lost interest.

DUE TO AN uncalculated-for habit, my enterview is delayed.

I finally get to James Chance — or rather, he finally gets up — late on Sunday afternoon. The Hippodrome gig finished around midnight on Friday and when I chit-chatted to Chance — an earnest, amiable, edgy sort of chap — he was agreeable about the prospect of an interview.

But James and his manager/constant companion Anya Phillips, nee Ginger Lee of James White and The Blacks, *do* like to 'enjoy' themselves, however. It's exceptionally cheap in Paris, they tell me. The interview time comes. And goes. No interview.

We eventually get to talk, walking around some kind of artificial mountain in the middle of a sprawling park opposite our hotel, having to make contingency arrangements when the lovely Paris evening decides to send a tropical downpour.

James is wearing CIA cliparound shades, and clings to a bottle of mineral water like it's a comforter.

Anya accompanies us, and it quickly becomes apparent that James Chance and The Contortions are James Chance and Anya, and that any other Contortions are nothing but a functional, decorative showcase for Jimmy.

Anya tells me that the "other guys in the band" — three guys and a gal, actually — aren't really important.

James isn't happy with them, anyway.

So how long have you had this line-up?

Chance: It's been like this since April, since last fall apart from the bass player. But when we were recording our record, we had to fire the bass player in the middle of the session. That last record is called 'Buy The Contortions'.

Phillips: B — U — Y.

Chance: By the way.

How did that go?

Chance: Well, we wasted several thousand dollars worth of studio time . . . Like, there was all this strife in the band and we had to start the whole thing over again. But it went fairly well after that considering that I had to produce it myself and the engineers they gave us were practically useless. Then the studio fucked up and accidentally destroyed three tunes, so I had to go back and remix them.

It seems to me that a lot of what you do, and also someone like Teenage Jesus. . .

Phillips: Please don't mention Teenage Jesus!

Why not?

Phillips: Every interview. . .

Chance: . . . Yeah, they're always bringing up Teenage Jesus. We feel like, at this point, what we do and what they and those other art bands do have nothing to do with each other. We consider ourselves a commercial band.

Phillips: Every time they interview James they bring up . . . Well, we don't mind the James Brown, and the Albert Ayler as much as the Teenage Jesus . . .

I'm sure they'll be pleased to hear it. But they all do tend to get thrown in like cake mix, don't they?

Chance: I think that when our own albums come out it'll be better. Being thrown together on that 'No New York' caused some confusion.

Why did it happen?

Phillips: It was Brian Eno's idea . . . Brian was really great, that was our first big break, really. Because, like, Brian's fans buy everything, anything that he produces, and so they all bought that. We got quite a big audience from that.

Won't you end up with a splintered audience?

Chance: When our own stuff comes out that's going to be forgotten; the stuff I produce myself

■ *Continues over*

■ *From previous page*

is so superior, and it's so different. Like, the band was in a pretty crude stage when we did 'No New York'.

What's happening in New York, nowadays?

Chance: Nothing. *Me!* And that's it. The audience is bigger than it ever was before, there's more clubs, they're always packed, there's tons of bands . . . But I don't think there's one new band since my band that's got anything going for it at all.

EGOTISTICAL IS one of Anya Phillips' favourite words. She uses it mostly when talking about her self, or James, two topics which occupy most of her conversation space. That, and how cheap. . .

By the time I'd finally got to the interview, a decision had already been taken not to really oppose anything Chance came out with. I'd talked briefly to them on Saturday afternoon, and sat in on a talk with the French promoters. Anya had told me all about *Grutzi Elvis*, a semi-infamous cheap-art-film with glossy new wave soundtrack (Chance, Teenage Jesus, Snatch, Eno, Clash, plenty more) which is something to do with the concurrent (or not) lives and deaths of Baader/Meinhof, and Elvis Presley. Anya played Priscilla, but isn't going to let the film come out unless her 'percentage' is sorted out. The soundtrack *is* coming out, however, and James is very embarrassed by his part in the project, an accapella version of 'That's When The Heartaches Begin'. He needed the money. A long way yet from 'total artistic control', it seems.

Is there anyone you feel you have something in common with?

Chance: Ah, George Clinton. That's one exception. He's really smart, he's got all his bands on different companies, and they do these big tours and all the companies throw in money. He's got total control, he does all the covers himself. . .

I think I'll get to the point where I'll be able to have the same thing, and a big company will accept it, but first I have to prove I can sell records.

Is there anyone in the UK that you like?

Chance: I don't really like English bands that much. I like a lot of disco, but it's not so much the artists that I like — practically anybody can be a disco singer — just the sound of it, the idea of disco. It's much more modern than rock and roll.

The UK has produced some arguably 'political' bands, whereas in the States. . .

Chance: I'm not really interested in that sort of narrow political thing; The Contortions could be looked at as political if you wanted to analyse it that way.

Phillips: The Contortions are an American band, and politics in America are totally different, politics in America centre not around the goverment but around corporations and big business. It's a different kind of politics. It's not Parliament, it's Exon . . .

Is that why you check Clinton?

Chance: Yeah, he's kind of a liberal though — that's what I don't like about him! He's got a very humanistic outlook, and that's why he's accepted by the record industry. The record industry is really fascist, but they're also liberals — in America their politics are liberal.

But with me, my attitude is *anti*-humanistic. I don't basically care about the human race. I mean, George Clinton donated some royalties from one of his concerts to UNICEF. I'd *never* do that. I'm *glad* there's all the pollution and radiation and everything in America, 'cos I just *want* to see them all get killed off.

Um, didn't you used to play jazz?

Chance: I was doing that for three years, but it just became more and more obvious that that was a totally dead thing. Who wants to play to a bunch of fat white liberals?

Phillips: Or fat black liberals.

Chance: Yeah. And just the whole idea of instrumental music, that you were supposed to dwell on every note like it was manna from heaven. . .

Jazz was cool in the '40s when it was more to do with a wild nightclub scene. If you listen to a live record from then, a musician'll be playing away and you can hardly hear him for the people yelling and talking in the background — which is cool. I don't care if people don't pay attention to me. I'd almost *rather* have them doing anything that *sitting there* and listening.

I mean, I think that's really sick.

Do you care if people listen to you lyrics?

Chance: Not really. They're kind of hard to catch. . .

Phillips: Ordinary rock lyrics are usually about loving some gurl, or going home to some gurl, or can't get enough of some gurl...

Chance: And I'm more likely to have had too much of some girl, or if they're not a girl at all, which usually they're not. The only reason that I spend any time on the lyrics is because I can't really sing something that's boring to *me*. But as far as the people listening go, I think that the actual words are secondary to the overall effect.

So what sort of places are you going to play in? Baseball stadiums?

Chance: The idea of playing in discos really appeals to me. We've been playing in *Hurrah's*, in New York, recently — that's a disco that went over to rock and roll. I like the idea of playing in a real disco where they have an actual disco crowd; that's the audience I want to get.

Phillips: I think that playing live is not that important, or it's not going to be in the '80s. It's just as well as be on *Kicks*, or *Soap Factory* or one of those disco shows on TV. There's also discovision coming up — video discs, where you have an image with the music.

Chance: We've already had *Time-Life* approach us about doing a video; they're so inexpensive to do. . .

ROCK AND roll is: global domination from your loft. Start with The Velvet Underground, and track from there. A history of intense personalities, eloquent abuse, elegant self-abuse, insults, hierarchies of temptation, wish-fulfilment, retribution, wanting to be *that* hip.

A passing and unusually respectful knowledge of revolutionary happenings in jazz music influences the kind of beat that these white R'n'R musicians produce. The excitement comes from taking up the original impetus, and imposing certain refinements upon it, imposing yourself upon it.

The American jazz low-life got really idealized somewhere along the line, hovering between seamy, junkie independence and art. American white youth got their kicks in the boho zone, digging those hep black cats. But did they know why?

Something like be-bop elaborated a (black) reflection of white, musical form. It was a rejection of what that form stood for, and under the rejection was a complex, obscured history: taboos, social and sexual climbing, concealed status symbols, degradation and interracial indentification.

James White plays a pale Junior Walker — bit freakier — dances a pale James Brown, and raps a pale narcissistic . . .?

"I love him because he may be white,

But every time I feel that smack,

I want him more because he's almost black. . ."

— James White and The Blacks, 'Almost Black'.

In other words, another minstrel, like Lou Reed.

How has your violent image grown up?

Chance: It's grown up because I started doing it. It's all *my doing*. I've always really believed in sensationalism, and I just wanted my band to be the most sensational band in New York.

Phillips: Last year I would call up these magazines and papers, and nobody wanted to know anything about The Contortions, and so James just started doing all this really wild stuff that the press could not ignore. How can Robert Christagau ignore James attacking his date?

Chance: Who wants to be just another band? To me music by itself is just not enough. It's boring, no matter how good it is. And it's more fun for me — I get really bored when I can't be violent.

But then, with James White and The Blacks it's totally different. We add a horn section, and these two teenage dancing girls, The Disco Lolitas, and it's more like a traditional soul revue. The reason I started attacking the audience was because they were so docile; there was one gig I played, in a big empty hall, and I thought they'd all be dancing. They were *sitting on the floor like hippies*, so I just started kicking them. . .

Can't disco get a bit pacifying?

Phillips: It's not pacifying, it's more hypnotic.

Chance: Yeah, it's like, trance-inducing, which is really interesting to me. I like the idea of having a physical effect, a really immediate, direct effect on people.

Do you think of what you're doing more as a career than as rock and roll, or art, or whatever?

Chance: Yeah, well, sure. A lot of bands come on with this, like, that they're doing it out of their great love for rock and roll, which is just bullshit. I couldn't care less about rock and roll, I couldn't care less about *funk*, I couldn't care less about anything, um, *me*.

It's 100 per cent business with me. That's what I consider myself, if anything — a businessman.

AFTER THE RAIN, we got back to their hotel room just in time for another interview this time for a radical, chic young French magazine. I sat through another hour or so of business talk, Anya talk, and James talk.

Anya bit into an asparagus, and said: "I want James to be like Giorgio Moroder, and win an Oscar.'

Chance: We want to do a lot of projects that are independent from each other. There'll be people who buy James Chance and The Contortions who don't even know about James White and The Blacks. We're gonna do Anya's 'Ginger Lee' album, which is gonna be like, along the same line as Amii Stewart, Grace Jones and Donna Summer. No live shows, just lip-sync on TV.

I might do an album with The Disco Lolitas. I'm not absolutely committed to any of these things. If I get tired of The Contortions then they'll cease to exist.

Phillips: You know, the greatest thing about being in a place like Paris is that you don't understand the language. So we don't have to listen to people spouting idiotic crap. In America you can't get away from it, because you understand everything everyone is saying. . .

Chance: I just want to learn enough to be able to tell taxi drivers where to take me. . .

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R. Fripp: A Suitable

LATE LAST AUTUMN Peter Gabriel played a rough mix of his still unreleased 'I Don't Remember' single to his American record company. One of the assembled marketing panel duly remarked that, although he quite liked the song itself, he intensely disliked the guitar solo. Why? Because, he went on to explain, the solo was simply an "annoyance factor" — in other words and everyday English a series of notes that would disturb the otherwise calm, comatose flow of US rock radio programming. And that, of course, would not do. At all.

A slight, charming, amusing and self-composed man, Robert Fripp laughs as I relate the anecdote. As well he might, since he performed the solo in question: a controlled, concentrated flare of metallic energy over the direct, headstrong rhythms of Gabriel's song.

(If the single is ever released, it seems all too likely that it will feature a much more conventional guitar part played by Sid McGinnis, a member of Gabriel's regular band).

Fripp laughs wickedly. He obviously enjoys the prospect of becoming another spikey sea urchin rolled into the sun-kissed shallows of the corporate record company lagoon, an unpleasant surprise for pale, fleshy, unwary executive feet. And with good reason — several major record companies have not made Fripp's evolution any the easier in recent times.

In fact, perhaps recognising the independently minded Fripp as something of a threat, however small at present, to their strangelhold on our planet's airwaves, these companies have gone well out of their way to place obstacles in his every path.

In September 1974 Fripp sensibly terminated King Crimson, then a trio consisting of himself, bassist John Wetton and drummer Bill Bruford. The band were musically immobile and Fripp felt unable to break the impasse.

Large areas of his personal and professional life seemed to be, quite literally, falling away and apart. His disillusionment with the business — one that had long lost its pleasure — of being the leader and guitar player in a wayward, occasionally influential rock band was fast becoming total.

As a result — and I quote from the brief autobiographical note included with the press kit of Fripp's 'Exposure' album — "leaving the industry between 1974 and 1977 to pursue alternative education, notably at the International Academy for Continuous Education, Sherborne House, me returned to music gradually in New York and, during the summer of 1978, I undertook to work in the marketplace for a period of three years. This commitment will complete in September 1981 during the Year of the Fripp".

(Don't fret, some of Fripp's odd turns of phrase will be explained below, others will not).

FRIPP'S ACTIVITIES during and since that gradual return have been extensively detailed. He has, among other involvements, played guitar on Gabriel's first solo album, David Bowie's 'Heroes', Blondie's 'Parallel Lines' and Hall and Oates 'Along The Red Edge'.

He has played guitar on and produced Gabriel's second solo album, Daryl Hall's contentious, also still unreleased 'Sacred Songs' and The Roches' 'The Roches' (Maggie, Terre and Suzzy Roche being three sisters who are held by those who know about such things to be among the leading lights of a Greenwich Village folk, New York, revival; Warners may or may not release the album in the UK).

Fripp has also made, played on and produced his own extremely interesting 'Exposure'. Originally intended as the third part of an 'MOR' (Fripp's choice of term) trilogy alongside 'Peter Gabriel II' and 'Sacred Songs', 'Exposure' has now become the first part of a planned Fripp trilogy — one aspect of his so-called Drive to 1981 — that will be completed by the release of his Frippertronic and Discotronic projects.

Actually, Fripp had to make 'Exposure' twice, his own designs for the album being repeatedly thwarted. Fripp, for example, had wanted Debbie Harry of Blondie, whose Chris Stein is now a good friend of Fripp's and seems to have been instrumental in encouraging Fripp to emerge from his exile, to sing on the album.

Chrysalis flatly refused permission.

Fripp had also wanted Daryl Hall to sing on the album. RCA, who had already shelved 'Sacred Songs' for a period of at least three years after its completion date, said Hall could only sing on certain tracks — those which would not "misrepresent" their artiste nor, presumably, threaten his then burgeoning career with Hall and Oates.

Such terrible petty tyrannies. Fripp eventually chose Peter Hammill, an acquaintance dating from Fripp's contributions to two early Van Der Graaf Generator albums, and Terre Roche as main featured vocalists; both rose to and over the occasion. But even after its re-recording 'Exposure' was subject to further delays and was only released in April of this year.

His abrasive liner note to the album is probably a convenient channel for much of the resentment he must have felt at having his public and private life so comprehensively disrupted, Fripp is fairly philosophical about the whole entanglement, as in fact he is about most things these days.

He goes on to describe his relationship to the major record companies as that of "the gazelle which, seeing a dinosaur approaching and just about to stumble into a tar pit, would put up a road sign with an arrow on it saying 'The tar pit is this way' ".

'Exposure' itself, by any reckoning dead or alive, is an extraordinary, epochal album, fully warranting its maker's proud and absolute approval. Typically, Fripp says the only change he would make would be "a marginal improvement in terms of the mixing perspective on one title."

'Exposure' was to have been the title of 'Peter Gabriel II', but seems much better suited to Fripp's work. Its musical innovations aside, the album is a progress report, essentially something of a child's guide to Robert Fripp 1974-1979, an absorbing index of his interests and possibilities, both of which are many and various.

'Exposure' crystallises the totality of its creator in a very novel manner. It is autobiographical, but not in any accepted sense; Fripp may well have hit upon a genuinely radical means of presenting personality on record. At the same time, the album gradually reveals itself to be a very carefully conceived and executed grid of contrasts and cross-references.

It is not remotely sterile, but brims with humanity, honesty, humour and certainty. It is often distinctly uneasy listening, but remains an open record (or book), although not a vulnerable one.

Among many other things, it anticipates an end to the myopic conceits of singing-songwriting etcetera rock as we know and loathe it; it is therefore important. Although never entirely taken with any of King Crimson's incarnations either on stage or on record, I find 'Exposure' irresistible — more on it before long in *Deja Vu*.

FRIPP'S DECISION to promote 'Exposure' with a world tour of record company offices, record shops, restaurants and other small, unlikely venues is utterly consistent with the album's intent. It is also consistent with Fripp's own aims and opinions; he is not a man much in favour of loose ends or endings.

His undertaking this tour indicates a concern that artist and audience are able to communicate on equal terms in some degree of intimacy. It shows a willingness and readiness to respect his audience, and also a humility of which most rock names seem incapable. (Taken literally — it might all have been a promo gag — Pink Floyd's plan to promote their forthcoming album by erecting a wall between themselves and their audience that is only removed at the end of the set appears both frighteningly condescending and supremely indicative of current trends).

Fripp's insistence on this intimacy overlaps his interest in the relationship between man and technology. Fripp has begun to examine this axis through his use of Frippertronics, a guitar plus devices plus player framework that Brian Eno helped him develop and that has resulted in Fripp exploring new areas of tonal and environmental sound with his already distinctive guitar style.

Pic: LISA TANNER

Ex-King Crimson maestro ROBERT FRIPP exposes himself after coming to terms with the machine age. ANGUS MacKINNON presses the on/off button.

Pic: BOBBY GROSSMAN
Hair: MARY LOU GREEN

Fripp and I were talking about technology in general. I was suggesting that it is often seen as something of an ominous Third Force — between good and evil — capable of crushing man with an inexorable momentum, that it is irrationally feared and tends to result in the regular resurgence of a 'back to nature' lobby, a body of opinion that tries to turn back the hands of time, but really only succeeds in breaking them and themselves in the process.

"It's an erroneous assumption," Fripp offers, "that a return to a normal way of living, whatever that might be, seems to imply some wonderful notion of returning to a golden age of English agriculture, a pastoral bliss, rural communities shining forth with Luddites having smashed all the machinery. I don't see that at all.

"I see any kind of dealing with the new world, however one might express that, necessarily involving technology that's at least as sophisticated as that which we have now. But, somehow, the use of that technology must be more appropriate."

('Appropriate' being the operative word — Fripp has this to say about nuclear power, another understandable source of fear and loathing among many: "Well, it's fine if you have nuclear consciousness and a nuclear lifestyle. If we ever do that, then let's consider nuclear energy then — when we live to be about 350,000 to half a million years old and we can see the results of our labours in that area a little more effectively").

"The implications," he continues, "behind Frippertronics are that the profitable relationship between humans and technology must rest on their both working together in some sense.

"If one looks at technology as something mechanical or programmed, one is at least appreciating that it doesn't have the property of life, that it isn't able to generate a certain kind of creative energy that is simply above its station. Human beings can also be machines in terms of their creative energy.

"Now, in that case they're no more use than machines and, since flesh can down-grade a lot more quickly than steel, unless the human being becomes *more* than a machine, it's going to be appreciably less useful than a lot of technology. That's a rather narrow view of it, of course.

"My point is that, by introducing the human being into this mechanical process, the human — if he's awake to the situation — can create a kind of dialogue between himself, and, in this sense, the machine.

"Although, for example, I have to submit to a certain pulse once the Revoxes are running, I can initially vary the speed of their pulse by placing the machines apart. But, once they do begin, I have to submit myself to how they play. That doesn't, however, deny me creative opportunity. I've also made the initial creative decision anyway."

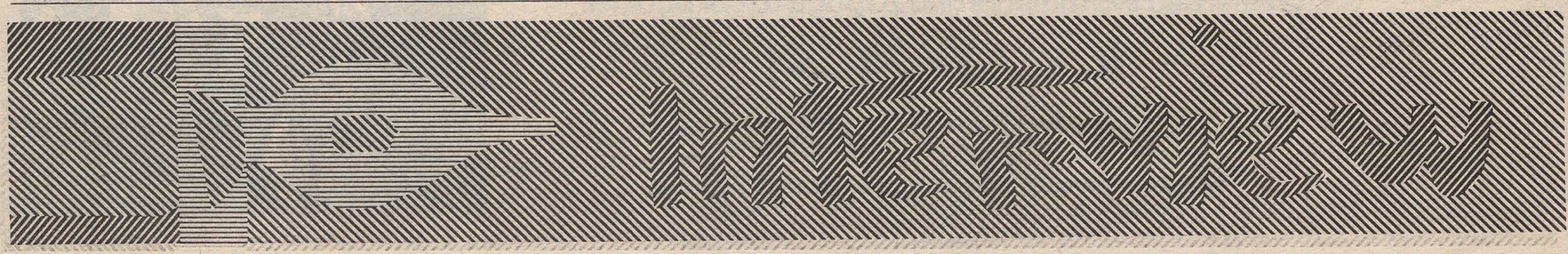
So Fripp proposes integration or co-operation with rather than alienation from machinedom. But his assessments aren't born out of his having been a member — or 'component' as he now refers to himself — of a (sic) techno-rock band.

"My first experience at Sherbourne," he relates, "was when it occurred to me that, having gone through this series of ideas that man is a machine and so on, I realised this was true of me. It was one of the most terrifying moments of my life."

Fripp says this in utter earnest. I have unformed visions of a mental apocalypse inside him, great churnings and yearnings to reshape such lumps as individuality and causality. I say a little hello to Kraftwerk.

"Part of myself," he proceeds, "saw 'This Fripp', which is the clue (to Fripp's use of 'me' as a first person pronoun and to his attitude to himself), as being exactly that; it/I was a machine. Everything inside me was just whirring away mechanically.

"Fortunately that experience doesn't live with me all the time. If it did, it would be completely impossible for me to do what I'm doing now. I think it's one of the graces that we're allowed to have fictions in terms of how we live. Without them, life would be unbearable."



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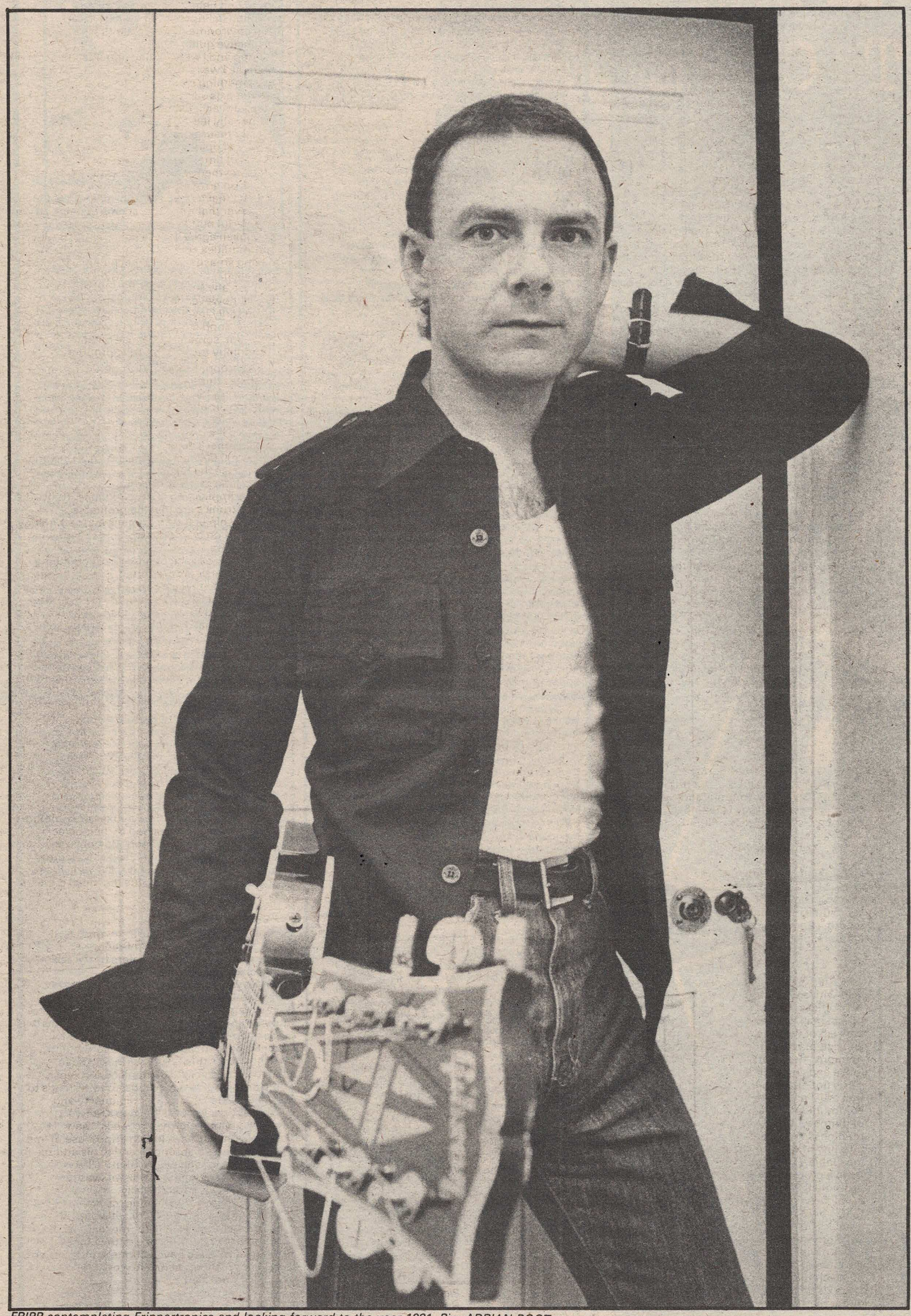

FRIPP contemplating Frippertronics and looking forward to the year 1981. Pic: ADRIAN BOOT.

AS FRIPP'S voice falls away, his features abruptly rearrange themselves, becoming intent, intense. He means this too. I don't think I'm alone in suspecting that his composure — he's been amiable and accommodating on each of the two occasions I've met him this year; it's nice to be talked to, not at — is only achieved through great effort of will. I don't imagine Fripp has any more or less to hide than anyone else, but I do think he's working very hard on himself and the sort of person he wants to be.

Meanwhile I ask him if he ever thought he had been running the simple risk of being consumed by rock machinedom.

"My current definition of freedom," Fripp replies obliquely, "is submitting gracefully to the inevitable. This involves another thing I specifically worked on at Sherbourne . . .

"I remember thinking to myself that I had chosen to be there. Then I realised that I hadn't chosen. I also thought to myself that I had chosen to come to Sherbourne in the first place. Then I realised I hadn't chosen to do so. There had been no choice involved; I had *had* to come. I worked it all back and couldn't find one example of anything in my life where I actually made a choice . . .

"There's a very good Sufi thing on this. 'A Sufi master says, 'I have freedom because I submit to the Will of God'. I have no choice; there is only one thing I can do."

Bouncing across my transcript — interviews are rarely the ordered call and response they appear to be in print — I alight now on Fripp's concept of Discotronics, hoping to somehow relate disco's application of machinedom to some equivalent area of Fripp's experience. I forget to remember that I'm about to be re-directed.

"Discotronics is defined," Fripp says, "as that musical experience at the interstice of disco and Frippertronics, and I've already written some material. One piece is a song in French, another is 'Ooooh, Mr. Fripp', which I've tried with The Roches singing — they were splendid — and I'm toying with the idea of using enviromentally generated sound — doors slamming as bass drums and so on — as well as Frippertronics as a way of replacing conventional scoring of orchestrations and synthesisers.

"It should be lots of fun. I'm not limiting my possibilities because, having made the decision to do it, it'll do itself in a kind of way and I'll just provide the hands to do it. I think people will be able to laugh out loud to do it. I think people will be able to laugh out loud to it. I'm sure I will; I've chuckled already . . .

"I won't be sending disco up. I mean, it's a language, a vocabulary, isn't it? But there are other implications . . ."

Edit and crosscut to Fripp's Theory of Disco, which he has outlined earlier.

"I think disco is a massive political statement in which the voters vote with their feet (pause for emphasis and effect; I smile feebly, brace myself for another surge of Frippology). In a word, they're voting out.

"In the early '60s you had civil rights, mainly an optimistic and positive series of political manoeuvres — that we can change the system by working within it, that it can be manipulated by such means to create situations for human beings to work in, and so on.

"And then — well, you had the assassinations of the two Kennedys and Martin Luther King, also Watergate, and so that proposition that you could work and proceed within a democratic framework of change was found, or at least expressed, to be undeniably true. It was in fact impossible. The democratic system as we understand its functions does not work.

"One of the responses" — Fripp's tone is relentless but, thankfully, not at all didactic — "could be considered to be punk. Fundamentally a pessimistic, negative political expression. Essentially two fingers to government or whatever.

"Now disco is also a very potent political expression that emerged around the same time as punk and new wave but which dealt with a political structure by ignoring it, completely. It says that the system doesn't work but , rather than waving fingers at it, forget it. One goes off to the disco. Thank God it's Friday night, and so on.

"After all, disco began in America — or rather was embraced as — an ethnic expression of two groups who'd suffered

■ *Continues over page*

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■ *From previous page*

repression; it was, to put it bluntly, the music of 'niggers and queers'. That was the whole tenor of it.

"Then suddenly, after being a vital and valid expression of something, the industry in America recognised disco and, as the industry always does, not only jumped on the bandwagon, but bought the bandwagon and built a few more as well."

Hence, presumably, Fripp's impish desire to put his own imprint on a music that he feels has been misappropriated by corporate interests: a desire that has self-evident parallels with his attempts to, as he puts it, "tweak" mainstream rock on 'Exposure', to enhance people's expectations and awareness of the form.

WHETHER or not one agrees with Fripp's reasonably straightforward analysis of the so-called disco phenomenon, it doesn't require Einsteinian acumen to appreciate that disco is only the latest in a long line of musics to have, so to speak, suffered at the hands of the multi-national record companies and their patronising, lowest common denominator marketing methods.

I'm not trying to talk elitism against populism, but integrity against complete lack of same.

When Fripp terms the companies 'dinosaurs', he means that they and their ways of working are obsolescent, if not obsolete. He means that they are no longer (I somehow doubt that they ever were) capable of linking artist and audience in a positive, productive, mutually beneficial manner.

But does Fripp hope that he and his partners in empiricism will bring about a noticeable change in emphasis on the corporate part? No, he's not that naive, although every little bit certainly helps — and 'Exposure' is certainly an infinitely more courageous, subversive gesture than, say, the safe, token radicalism of Bowie's 'Low', 'Heroes' and 'Lodger'.

Bowie, it seems, lacks any of Fripp's rigour — but then that's Bowie's problem, not yours or mine. Bowie can only hand down confusion and resignation — he's intelligent but self-indulgent — whereas Fripp offers clarity and determination.

Such maturity as Fripp's is not easily obtained. His time at Sherbourne was obviously as traumatic as it was ultimately strengthening. But Fripp has, if you like, seen a light, and is not keeping it under a bushel. Good for him. He offers endless anecdotes about Sherbourne which time and available space prevent me from repeating. Some snippets follow all the same . . .

"Sherborne was a very practical experience, which is what appealed to me. There were so many situations on a day to day level where you were brought up against intense difficulties — and yet you were still having these bright ideas going round inside you. And, if you were worth involving with these ideas, then how could you possibly find a way to hold onto them? . . .

"The implication there is that some people have one vision at some stage in their life, which they articulate and of which they work out the details for the rest of their days. Well, I've had mine. If I see nothing else in my life, then I see quite enough to get on with — and in a kind of way that leaves me in no personal doubt about the substance of that experience or vision.

"If you like, some things happen in a certain kind of way that you just don't dispute . . . ."

After talking to Fripp at some length about the founder of Sherbourne, the enigmatic mathematician, linguist and philosopher-scientist John Godolphin Bennett (1897-1974), tapes of whose speeches Fripp has been busily editing (extracts appear throughout 'Exposure'), about C.I. Gurdjieff, a rogue Russian mystic whom Bennett met in Turkey and who exerted a great influence on him, about cosmology in general and Glastonbury in particular, in fact about any number of topics that are usually and foolishly dismissed by many as irrelevantly esoteric, I can only conclude rather bathetically that Fripp is (a) very well informed on such topics and (b) certainly *not* running on empty whims in his enthusiasm for them.

MEANWHILE, AMONGST all this, I express the view that the Western world is rapidly becoming philosophically and spiritually bankrupt and I wonder aloud what measures could or should be taken — not to stop this decline (it's ineffable, inevitable), but to prepare for what follows.

"Well," Fripp ventures, "the main thrust of what I'm doing at the moment is to do with developing parallel organisation. The whole way the Fripp tour is being lined up is simply 'doing it' in accordance with what I profess. Often action and professed values are two different things, but it's important to me to try and live by what I think are good ways of doing things, to try to experiment and validate. . ."

"I'm very pleased there's sufficient inertia in the system which gives us a little more breathing space to create a parallel network. For example, socially and economically independent towns and villages — I mean it has become increasingly apparent that over

Pic: LISA TANNER

the next ten years Wimborne (Fripp's Dorset residence) will have to become entirely responsible for its own sewage disposal, health, social and entertainment services.

"None of those things will be provided by a central government. But we have time now to do those things, to set them in motion, if we work for them. If the dinosaurs toppled overnight, there would be a complete breakdown. There would inevitably be panic and dislocation. But it is feasible that we have the time to construct a rather bodged, but effective, job on a national level.

"Nothing killed the (real) dinosaurs but a change in the weather. They were a very effective means of organisation for some 140 million years, but then the weather changed — and I think our weather is changing.

"But independence — if one sees a flight of birds, each of the birds is independent but there is nevertheless a general sense of direction. You see, the practical parts of my Sherborne experience were to do with not only how one could accept responsibility for oneself as an independent entity, but how could one work with others and develop a group consciousness.

"Now . . . that group concept is a very difficult thing to grasp in practice. But we had a taste of it there. Theoretically speaking, there is a part of us which is always 'us', 'everyone' and part of God, all the rest of it you see. . ."

"One of the most incredible ideas" — another crosscut — "that Gurdjieff put forward was the Law of Reciprocal Maintenance, the law of mutual eating.

"Everyone eats and is in turn consumed. The idea that in the same way we tend sheep for meat and wool, we ourselves are being bred for some specific purpose. And, if we're particularly scrawny or have wool of poor quality, how then can we expect very much more than to be tapped on the head? My personal experience of this is that God needs a helping hand."

And no, don't snigger; Fripp's faith — I can't think of a better word — does not need or ask to be called into question. Moments of silence ensue. . .

ON A MORE mundane level, Fripp has been asked to provide some soundtrack material for Debbie Harry's most recent celluloid outing, still hopes to participate in the *Alphaville* film project with her that was mooted earlier this year, to record a third Frip & Eno album, to complete his work on "discovering a new vocabulary for the modern rock and roll guitarist", to finance further Bennett tapes, to organise a new community experiment in Cornwall, to use his time as intensively and productively as he can.

And how exactly will the Year of the Fripp manifest itself?

"How should I know? We're not there yet. The Year of the Fripp will show itself for what it is and I can only have a general sense of it now."

Temporary baulk: all this from a man who at some early stage in King Crimson's erratic progress earned notoriety for his sexual appetites over wild weekends in Wimborne? *Plus ca change, plus ca change:* they call it redistribution of energies.

As we end up, I ask Fripp whether he has had any news of Jamie Muir, manic and moustachioed percussionist in Crimson's 'Larks Tongues' line-up.

"No," he replies, "Jamie went the whole way and lives in a monastery on the borders of Tibet. My own way, The Fourth Way, is to do with action in the world, in the marketplace, if you like. Whereas Jamie's is similar to the most difficult of all yogas.

"But there are different traditions. Some involve retreat, and the energies generated thereby contribute just as much as those generated by people like myself. Different things suit different people. That's all."

And (I believe in) Robert Fripp. That's all.

(AFTERNOTE: If you're at all interested in finding out more about J.G. Bennett, then his own autobiography, *Witness*, Turnstone Books, £2.75 in paperback, is as good a starting point as any.)

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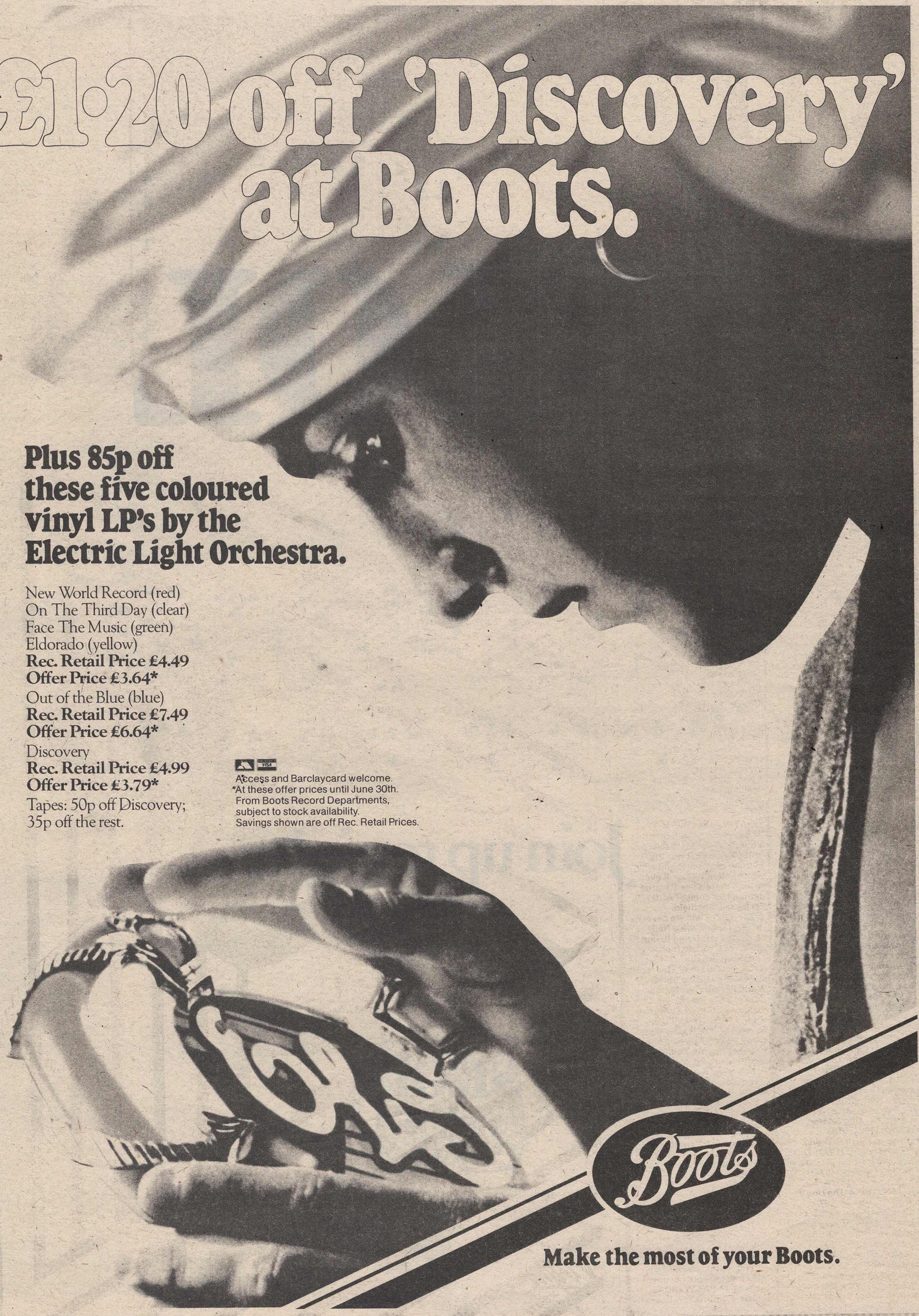

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Every home should have one . . .

I AM very interested in buying a jukebox and would be very grateful for any information you can provide on price, availability etc. **STUART PRICE, Aylesbury, Bucks.**

● **The guy to contact is Rob Edwards, who specialises in finding clapped-out jukes and renovating them. Says Edwards: "If you're offered a jukebox for less than £150, the chances are that it either needs a fair bit of attention or happens to be a cheaply made machine such as a Jupiter, a make which really didn't sound too good and wasn't built to last. The Wurlitzers and Seeburgs are probably the best types of jukes to buy because they are fine from the point of view of sound quality and, quite importantly, retained a similar type of mechanism for many years — which means that it's easier to obtain spares when things do go wrong. The Rock-Ola is another good machine but loses out when it comes to availability of spare parts."**

Edwards adds that he's always got a small number of '50s and early '60s jukeboxes on hand, which he sells for £150 and upwards, his satisfied clients including Mike Batt, Jake Riviera, Gerry Rafferty, producer Sandy Roberton and various record companies. For further details, serious buyers are advised to contact Rob Edwards himself on 01-670-6935.

IT WAS great to see an interview with Bruce Dern a short while ago. Now can we have a list of his films? **DAVID SOWERBY, London W4.**

● **The usually psychotic Dern arrived on the screen via Elia Kazan's *Wild River* in 1960. In '64 he appeared in Hitchcock's *Marnie*, following this with a role in *Hush Hush Sweet Charlotte*, a Bette Davis horror shot which came out the same year. Then came a brief association with Roger Corman, which resulted in *The Wild Angels, The St Valentine's Day Massacre* (both 1966) and *The Trip* (1967); since when Dern has logged appearances in *Waterhole 3, The War Wagon, Will Penny, Psych-Out, Hang 'Em High* (1967), *Castle Keep* (1968); *Support Your Local Sheriff, Number One, They Shoot Horses Don't They* (1969); *Bloody Mama, Rebel Rousers* (1970); *Drive He Said, The Incredible Two Headed Transplant, King Of Marvin Gardens* (1971); *The Cowboys, Silent Running, Thumb Tripping* (1972) *The Laughing Policeman* (1973); *The Great Gatsby* (1974); *Smile, Posse, Family Plot, Won Ton Ton — The Dog That Saved Hollywood* (1975); *Folies Bourgeoises* (1976); *Black Sunday, Coming Home, The Driver* (1977); *The Moto Drivers* (1978).**

Monty, who's virtually Dern's stand-in, says he can't remember any more and has never heard of the last one. So if we've got things wrong, just blame the French magazine we nicked all this info from.

THANKS to Nick Kent, I discovered 'Foreign Affairs' by Tom Waits. But my copy has few sleeve notes and I've always wondered who the backing musicians were. Can you help? **ETHEL, Edinburgh.**

● **Seems that Smirnoff has nothing to compare with the magical properties of Nikki The K. Meanwhile, back at the city desk, your query has proved no problem, our copy of 'Foreign Affairs revealing the Spectre of Saville Row utilised the talents of Frank Vicari (tenor sax), Jack Sheldon (trumpet), Jim Hughart (bass) and Shelly Manne (drums) throughout the album, the orchestral arrangements being by Bob Alcivar, who also conducted. Gene Cipriano played clarinet on 'Potters Field' only, while Bette Midler, as you doubtlessly know, helped out vocally on 'I Never Talk To Strangers'. Incidentally, trumpeter Sheldon is the same guy who starred in the TV comedy series *Run, Buddy, Run* back in the '60s.**

I AM trying to trace the collectors' set of Beatles singles, complete with presentation box. I'd be grateful if you could tell me where to obtain this object of desire. **SIMON, Woodnesborough, Sandwich, Kent.**

WHAT WAS the title of The 'N'Betweens' 'You Better Run' single? I know it was released in 1966, but what was the number of this disc and why won't EMI re-release it even though there's a fairly large demand for copies? **ANDY, Eccleshall, Sheffield.**

● **The '60s — will we never be rid of 'em! But while Neil Spencer's out trying to find the cure I'll sedate these sufferers with the info that: (a) the boxed set of 24 Beatles singles is available from World Records, Parkbridge House, Little Green, Richmond, Surrey, the price being £19.95. And (b) the obverse of 'You Better Run' was 'Evil Witchman', a Kim Fowley song, the catalogue number of this disc being DB8080. The reason why record companies don't reissue discs of this type too often is that though a demand builds up while the record remains hard-to-get and folk are ready to wack out huge fees for a copy, all enthusiasm usually wanes as soon as the reissue is available at cut-prices through W. H. Smith's.**

I KNOW The Shadows' version of 'Cavatina' is known as 'The Theme From The Deerhunter' — but I seem to remember the same piece of music being in another film. can you remind me which one it was and thus put me out of my misery? **PAT WARD, Carlisle, Cumbria.**

● **According to our man in the stalls, 'Cavatina' first surfaced as part of Stanley Myers' score to *The Walking Stick*, a David Hemmings-Samantha Eggar thriller, in 1970. Guitarist John Williams recorded the number as long ago as 1971, though his version only recently entered the charts, thus making it one of the great all-time 'sleepers'.**

IN THE Import column a few weeks ago, reference was made to a Chicago live album cut during the band's Chicago Transit Authority period. I have since written to an import company but they couldn't trace such a record. Can you provide further details so that I can order a copy? **TIM HORNER, Beaford, N. Devon.**

● **The album mentioned was 'Chicago Transit Authority/Live In Concert' released on Magnum MR 604 and released by Magnum Records, 118 East 65th Street, New York, NY 10021. Recorded at the Toronto Rock And Roll Revival of '69, the album features versions of 'Does Anybody Know What Time It Is?', 'Liberation', 'I'm A Man', 'Beginnings', 'Intro Song', 'Purple Song', 'Questions 67 And 68' and '25 Or 6 To 4'. My copy of the disc was imported by Stage One Records, Parshine House, 30 High Street, Godalming, Surrey.**

TOM WAITS. Pic: CHRIS HORLER

CAN you please print a list of all The Jam's singles? **KANIN MURJI, Putney, London SW15.**

● **By the great fringe of Cathy McGowan (an ancient Mod oath once used by the Carnaby tribe) your wish shall be granted! The first Jam single was 'In The City'/'Takin' My Love' (Polydor 2068 866), which arrived by Lambretta (or was it a Vespa?) in April, 1977. Since then, we've had 'All Around The World'/'Carnaby Street' (2058 903 — July, 1977); 'The Modern World'/'Sweet Soul Music'/'Back In My Arms Again'/'Bricks And Mortar' (2058 945 — October, 1977); 'News Of The World'/'Aunties And Uncles'/'Innocent Man' (2058 995 — February, 1978); 'David Watts'/'A Bomb In Wardour Street' (2059 054 —August, 1978); 'Down In The Tube Station At Midnight'/'So Sad About Us'/'The Night' (POSP — — October, 1978) and 'Strange Town'/'The Butterfly Collector' (POSP 34 — March, 1979).**

Noosha Fox

NEW 12 INCH SINGLE

THE HEAT IS ON

LIMITED EDITION 12 INCH SINGLE
IN PICTURE SLEEVE CHS 12 2337

ALSO AVAILABLE IN 7 INCH VERSION

Chrysalis

ECLECTIC: (Ancient philosopher) selecting from each school of thought such doctrines as pleased him; (person, doctrine) borrowing freely from various sources; not exclusive in opinion, taste, etc. **Concise Oxford Dictionary.**

ANN LENNOX and DAVE STEWART. Pic GEORGE BODNAR

A STEVE CLARKE HOLIDAYS. . .

LOOKING AT THE TOURISTS

. . .CULTURAL EXCURSION

IF EVER a band called out to be described eclectic — one of the most over-worked adjectives in rock journalism — then it's The Tourists, the North London band whose debut single and album have recently taken up residence in your local record emporium.

The Tourists are a *band* par excellence — dreadfully misrepresented on their album, which, although not a bad waxing, hardly illustrates how good they really are.

Not only are they eclectic, they are also singularly unfashionable. Quite how they've managed to secure several ecstatic reviews in the current climate I can't begin to imagine.

With the sole exception of Ann Lennox, the peroxide blonde focal point who onstage bears some resemblance to a demented Debbie Harry, The Tourists have, tut tut, long hair. Not only that, they also make no concessions to those who believe that for a band to be hip in '79 a degree of political awareness has to be evident in the lyrics.

Moreover the average age of The Tourists is somehwere above 25. Drummer Jim Tooney, at 34 the oldest of the group, apparently turned down an offer to join The Rolling Stones in pre-Charlie Watts days. He was playing in a New Orleans jazz band at the time and thought the Stones were too poppy.

Staunch new wavers The Tourists are not, yet nevertheless they could not possibly have evolved without the new wave. Because, quite simply, The Tourists have synthesized the major pop styles of the last ten years and personalised them into something which, if not devastatingly original, is at least recognisable as Tourists' music.

They have all the energy of the best punk, the muscle of the best hard rock and a hint of the melodic flair of Britain's best tunesmiths, be they Lennon and McCartney or Richard Thompson and Alan Hull.

In guitarist Dave Stewart and drummer Jim Toomey they have exciting musicians of a rare quality, and in Ann Lennox they have a charismatic performer whose voice combines the power of a Maggic Bell with the purity of Sandy Denny, and who is visually entrancing.

In fact in many ways I'm tempted to describe The Tourists as a new wave Fairport Convention, although such a description is as hollow as calling The Clash The Rolling Stones of the late '70s. The only thing that irritates me about The Tourists is the occasional pseudo-profundity of their lyrics, the responsibility of rhythm guitarist Peet Coombes.

Coombes shares the vocals with Ann, frequently to telling effect, and is seen by his fellow Geordie Dave Stewart as some kind of Kerovac figure. His vocals, very much in the Ferry/Bowie tradition but thankfully not as mannered as either, are, along with the ferocious energy of much of The Tourists modus operandi and Ann's visuals, the new wave ingredients in this heady brew.

The line-up is completed by Eddie Chin, a ponytailed bassist whose on stage movements are reminiscent of Jethro Tull's original bassman, Glenn Cornick, and who is a native of Singapore to boot. Just what is it about Orientals and bass playing?

"I tell ya, there's a million sides to the band," says Dave Stewart, a quietly spoken, imaginatively attired gent whose face looks older than his 26 years. "When people talk about influences it's really difficult, 'cause I think we're influenced by everything."

Stewart himself comes from a background of playing folk clubs in the North East, from which area he was suddenly plucked at a tender age to play a part in the launching of Elton John's Rocket Records in the early '70s.

Along with two others, he was a member of Longdancer, a surrogate Crosby, Stills and Nash who were the first band signed to Rocket. He's still reluctant to talk about the episode.

"It completely fucked us up," he says in his melodious North Eastern hippy near-whisper. "I'd just left school where I'd been playing in folk clubs, and the next thing I knew was playing support to Elton John in 36,000 seater stadiums in Italy.

"Rocket and Elton were really nice to us. It was just that we didn't know what was going on. Like interviews with the press, for instance. I thought it was natural for bands to be interviewed by the press. I didn't realise there were millions of bands struggling to try and do something.

"We just sent a tape and the next thing we were in London and we'd made an album. We were so naive it was unbelievable. One of the guys in the band has got completely white hair now. Another guy is delivering bread. It took me about three years to get back properly into playing in a band and really believing in something.

"For six months afterwards I just sat in a room with an electric guitar and an amp. I'd always wanted to play electric guitar and Longdancer were an acoustic group."

His musical background is definitely paying dividends with The Tourists. Not only can he howl away with maximum potency, but he and Coombes imbue the songs with guitar lines that can only be described as Beatleisms.

The nucleus of The Tourists formed when Stewart and Coombes — a reclusive type who writes his stream of consciousness verse in a council house — began writing and playing in friends' homes in Crouch End, North London. This was some three years ago and Stewart was suffering withdrawal symptoms from Longdancer.

"The funny thing about this group is that we never thought about being a group," he recalls. "And to be perfectly truthful Peet and I were a bit strung out, like. And we just used to run around playing our songs, thinking they were fantastic but it didn't enter our heads to have a group till all this thing happened with Logo Records."

He is referring to how, after the newly formed Logo Records signed him and Peet as singer-songwriters they and Ms Lennox decided they'd be better off forming a band.

Dave had met Ann while she was waitressing at a health food restaurant in Hampstead and she had asked his advice on signing a "really bum management contract" she'd been offered.

As a result she was introduced to Logo and signed as a soloist. Consequently when the three of them said they wanted to form a band together, Logo — who'd laid plans to promote Ann "as a white Joan Armatrading" — wanted none of it. But after a year and a half of legal wrangling Logo acquiesced.

The band in its present form has been together since last summer. Until their recent stint as support to Roxy Music almost all their gigs have been in London. Ann herself hails from Aberdeen, but came to London to read music at The Royal Academy. Apart from being a fairly foxy lady, one of the most admirable qualities about her on stage is her obvious enthusiasm; throughout the set her and Dave constantly trade grins.

Off stage she is a helpful interviewee, and though the clothes she wore when I talked to her aren't as, well, eye-catching, as her on stage threads, she is still a sight to behold, wearing enough make-up to start up a Max Factor counter and enough tat to equip a stall down Portobello Road.

She hasn't always looked this way: "I used to be very mousy. I was feeling pretty mousy at the time I met Dave. A bit trodden on. I lived in a tiny bedsit in Camden — with my harmonium. I had this vague idea that I wanted to sing, but I didn't know how to go about it.

"I was desperate to leave Aberdeen to go to London. I went to The Royal Academy 'cause I wanted to be a professional flute player. I took up the piano and harpsichord as well. But then I realised it wasn't the right place to be, and I thought, 'What am I going to do next?' So I thought about doing music therapy. . . art. . ."

She quit music college the week before her finals.

She continues: "I feel it's very important that I'm free in my head and that I don't have to follow anyone else's trend; that the clothes I wear and the way I look and the way I present myself are exactly how I feel.

"And if I can't do that musically and if I can't do that physically and visually then I might as well be dead. I don't follow fashion. Fashion isn't to be followed. It's to be created."

But surely wearing your hair the way you do is following fashion?

"Yes. To an extent. I just felt like that. I was sick of sitting in this room with my harmonium, and peroxiding my hair was a very dramatic thing to do. My hair was a different colour and I myself was a different colour."

People are automatically going to say you're influenced by Debbie Harry?

"Of course they will. And I'm going to accept that. I think she's great." She lights up with wide-eyed admiration. "I'm not trying to emulate Debbie Harry. . . PLEASE. I'd be crazy to do that because if I want to achieve personal success and I emulate somebody else, that's immediate failure. I want to be recognised for being me."

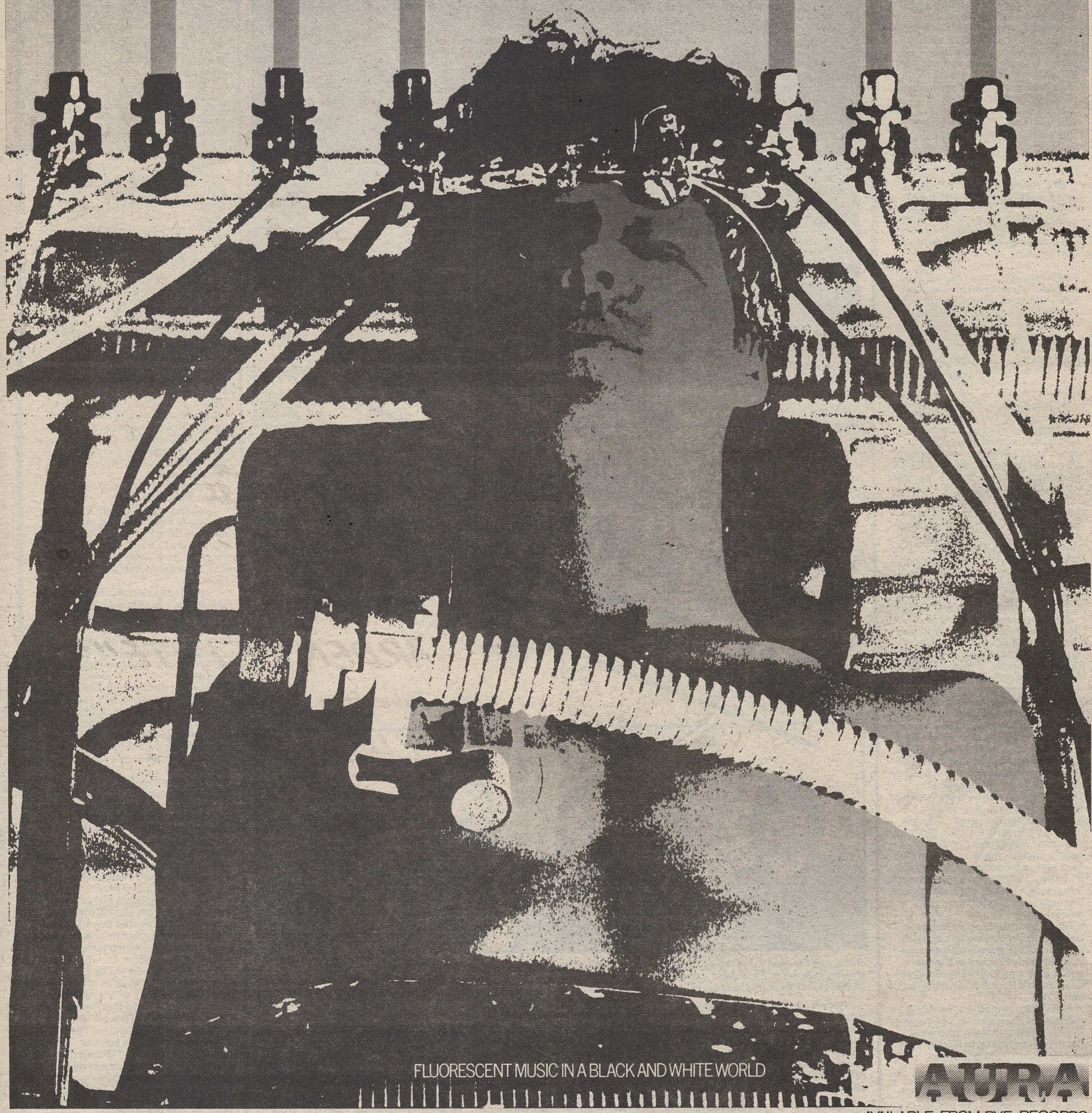
One band who were convinced The Tourists were ripping them off were The Rezillos who even went to the trouble of spray canning several London dressingrooms with anti-Tourists graffiti.

Ann: "The reason we've been compared to The Rezillos is because The Rezillos were fronted by a male and a female." "And that," says Dave, "is the end of the comparison.

So *how* do they describe The Tourists' music? "It's eclectic music," opines Ann. "There's no blinkers on us. If we want to do something we're not thinking about fashion. We're very pro getting good feelings across and getting people to react. It's got to be total commitment. Really."

NEON ACCELERANDO

JOHN MILLS-COCKELL



FLUORESCENT MUSIC IN A BLACK AND WHITE WORLD

AURA

AVAILABLE FROM PYE RECORDS

INTERVIEW: (from left) Many Elias, Phil Crowther, Jeff Starr, Allan Brain, Peter Allerhand.

THE INTERVIEW INTERVIEW

SUBJECT: The world export potential of songs about queers and drugs. MARKET RESEARCH by BOB EDMANDS

"IF YOU meet an audience for the first time, you've got to show them who's boss. I don't think you can do that in a kind way. You've got to come across as strong. If they think you're weak, they'll pull you to shreds, whatever the music is like."

This butch opinion is the property of Mr Jeff Starrs, lead singer with a band called Interview. Mr Starrs is sitting in an armchair in a flat in the spa town of Bath, is dressed in a smart funky chic sort of way, and looks a little like Henry Fonda impersonating Oscar Wilde. It is difficult to imagine Mr Starrs showing anyone who's boss, let alone the sceptical audiences of the British rock circuit.

Mr Starrs has a taste for self-destructive homosexuals — or at least such people seem to turn up a lot in his song lyrics. There is, for example, an American poet called Hart Crane, whom Mr Starrs describes as "a drunk and a homosexual". Mr Crane killed himself by jumping off a ship in the Gulf of Mexico, and is celebrated in the Interview song 'Hart Crane In Mexico'.

Then again there is a number about Montgomery Clift, a Hollywood contemporary of James Dean. Clift was one of the stars of *The Misfits* with Marilyn Monroe and Clark Gable, and he spent his final days with his butler on Fire Island off the American coast.

Clift is commemorated in an Interview song called 'Fire Island'.

"Our first album will take as its theme queers and drugs," says Mr Starrs, and he laughs very quietly.

Interview's first album is due out at the end of this month. Called 'Big Oceans', it's the first of eight they're contracted to provide for the Virgin label.

Chances are that the album will win a substantial reputation, even though Interview are practically unknown outside Bath and the West Country. Mr Starrs writes elegant, literate lyrics and the band's guitarists Alan Brain and Pete Allerhand have a way with memorable tunes.

SOME TWO weeks later Mr Starrs looks equally at one with his environment, only this time it's the Nashville pub in West London.

And this time he's making good his boast about audiences, fixing the crowd with an intense stare, strutting aggressively about the stage, and flinging himself about in an animated manner. There is little left of the languid literatus from Bath.

Equally there is nothing effete about Mr Starr's vocal delivery. His style is somewhere on the Elvis Costello and Graham Parker axis, though whose isn't these days, dearie? But the resemblance is not too significant because Interview's music is not in the least similar, except perhaps in its quality.

Interview's influences are not all that immediately apparent. True, there are the occasional R&B oldies, but they're suitably unusual ones, such as Doris Duke's 'Feet Start Walking'.

Once you get away from the crisply emphatic rhythm section which is so good it sounds almost black, things start to get a little more mysterious.

Jeff Starrs cites two musicians from the '60s as particular favouries of his. They're Tom Rapp and Tim Buckley, neither exactly familiar names even in the most sophisticated households.

Rapp led a band called Pearls Before Swine and their albums appeared initially on the somewhat obscure ESP label. His science fiction derived songs drew comparisons with the likes of Leonard Cohen and Jacques Brel.

Tim Buckley, who died from a drugs overdose four years ago, began his career as a folkie but went on to produce a string of uncompromising albums that experimented with a variety of styles including jazz-rock.

So what's a young band doing in 1979 drawing on the legacy of forgotten hippies? The answer is simple. They're making the sort of music that could at last break the American market for Virgin.

It's just the sort of thing they love over there. A solid blasting rock band with mysterious intellectual overtones. In their own way, Interview seem as shrewd a signing for Virgin as Dire Straits were for Vertigo. Not obviously fashionable, but potentially huge once the audiences twig.

Peter Gabriel latched onto Interview fairly early on. The former Genesis singer went along to one of their gigs in Bath and was impressed enough to have them as support act for his Hammersmith shows last Christmas.

Says Jeff Starrs: "He asked us out to his place, and we spent some time messing around in his studio."

Interview have a tape which was produced by Gabriel, and the songs have a smoother, more mystical style than their own hard rock demos. The band say though that the album, produced by Colin Thurston, is truer to their live style.

If Interview make it they'll be one of the few West Country bands to emerge in recent years. The Pop Group are the only other new act to have broken out of the area.

In Jeff Starr's opinion The Pop Group are a bit pretentious, but later he plays me an Interview demo that features a song with lyrics in French.

Is that not a bit pretentious, too?

"No," says Jeff, "the words themselves aren't pretentious, and you can't say the song's pretentious just because the words are in a different language."

"Besides," says Alan Brain, "we want to crack the French market too."

Simple Minds

Chelsea Girl

THE NEW SINGLE

ZUM 11

C/W

"GARDEN OF HATE"*

Taken from the Zoom album

"LIFE IN A DAY"

Zulp 1.

* Not available elsewhere.

Zoom

Marketed and Distributed by Arista Records.

ARISTA

SIMPLE MINDS ON TOUR

Saturday 30th June	BIRMINGHAM, Barbarella's	Friday 13th July	JACKSDALE (NOTTS), Grey Topper
Tuesday 3rd July	LONDON, Marquee	Friday 20th July	KIRKLEVINGTON, Country Club
Wednesday 4th July	NOTTINGHAM, University	Thursday 26th July	SHEFFIELD, Limit Club
Friday 6th July	WOLVERHAMPTON, Lafayette	Friday 27th July	LIVERPOOL, Erics
Saturday 7th July	LONDON, Nashville Rooms	Sunday 29th July	LEEDS, Fforde Green Hotel

SINGLES

"Sounds fly through the night, I chase my vinyl dreams to Boogie Wonderland" — ***Earth Wind and Fire***

You wouldn't believe me. If I listed all the singles that have tied for Single Of The Week you wouldn't believe me. It's more than one wallet can stand. Most of them are imports and all of them I firmly believe are among the best 45s released this year. This column will be peppered with their magnificence — I enjoyed this batch of records more than any other I've had to review. Try to hear them at least — it's cracking music.

SINGLE OF THE WEEK

CHIC: Good Times (Atlantic import. Time 8:13). Chic singles are prowling 1979, around and all about, showing their heels to just about every other outfit seeking to notch up a chain of success. An unbreakable motion, Bernard Edwards' bass and Nile Rodgers' rhythm guitar are the toughest parade in this halcyon era. 'Good Times' is the hatchet attack sister of 'Le Freak', chanting the facts about life under the floor lights. Money in your pocket, weekend, vodka and coke and you're looking ace, feeling fit. The bass lays itself between your shoulders and down, you and music slide as one being. Get out and use it. That's what all disco's for.

● **SINGLE OF THE WEEK**

MAVIS STAPLES: Tonight I Feel Like Dancing (Warner Bros import. 6:05). The same feel as 'This Is It' by Melba Moore or 'Young Hearts Run Free' washes across this atmospheric blinder from Mavis. A big hit, no sweat. The Muscle Shoals Sound rinses right down through the fire on the drums and the breeze on the brass, and give that rhythm guitarist whatever he drinks. 'TIFLD' is a stunning product of some unholy meeting between Labelle and Mighty Sparrow tied up tight with the type of chorus that catches you bellowing before you know it. I wish I could play this to you right through the page then you'd see. Infectious don't come into it.

SEX PISTOLS: C'Mon Everybody (Virgin). What more can be said about this project? The packaging this time would have us believe that the country is in a state of panic over something called 'punk rock'. What's more it tells its consumers to revel in ignorance and, ah, havoc. More plodding pub rock for buyers who think low IQ is a Chinese restaurant.

PATRIK FITZGERALD: Improve Myself (Polydor). Well, I thought I'd become browned off with Pat. But this is very perky in a Bowie 'Images' type way, though it's nowhere as snappy as Jonesy was then. If he got a *TOTP* he'd hit with this — it jerks and skips with PF double tracked and sounding far more alive than his more recent dour outings led us to gossip on. Trouble is, for 90p it's criminally short, even though there's two on the rear. Does Patrik Fitzgerald like John Sebastian though?

COWBOYS INTERNATIONAL: Nothing Doing (Virgin). Fabulous name covers a pretty (both senses) weak song. One of those crystal, slight English voices gives no weight to this ineffectual electronic sub-disco bounce. The drums may as well not have been recorded, as they carry all the punch of a *Mind Your Language* script editors' meeting. You do however get a free flexi-disc with it that is equally powder puff.

CABARET VOLTAIRE: Nag Nag Nag (Rough Trade). The trouble is, fans of these bands think I won't have any truck with anything that doesn't disco. The letters I get lead me to believe that our 'new music' colleagues suspect that non-sympathisers simply aren't 'in tune with the scene' enough to understand / appreciate true quality. Well, Cabaret Voltaire cut like the other act on the bill with Metal Urbain and Suicide, and their record is as flat as a witch's tit. It's dull, unusable, and quaint but it does have a good title. Probably about a horse race.

SYMARIP: Skinhead Moonstomp (Trojan). It's old, kinda fashionable and we remember the title so it clicks as being good. We play it and the years roll back. Cheese roll back actually, because this is a very cheesy track and not at all the 'classic' collectors would hogwash us with. The beginning chant about *"put your braces together and boots on your feet"* still sounds rousing but the following song is extremely lame. It is backed by 'Guns Of Navarone' by The Skatalites though, so all is not lost. (And 'GON' still makes me check to see if the playing arm is waving around.)

● **SINGLE OF THE WEEK**

HARVEY MASON: Groovin' You (Arista Import 6:15). A jazz discomix of undeniable power and nasty like a bacon slicer. The bass picks and spits with that kind of metallic twang, as if it was being played by tiny hammers. Without the hint of melody it's left for us to scat along with the back lines and sign in with the salamanders. 'Groovin' You' is a crazy speedy record that you could dress to on Friday night — even if the strides will prove tricky to nail down, chaps. Ignore this and you'll never live it up/down.

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES: Mittageisen (Polydor). I am led to understand that this is for release in Germany only, tho' it is to be available on UK import. This is a version of their 'Metal Postcard' sung in the Fathertongue. Why do their drums always sound like the bass section is atop some bloke's back, *a la* Don Partridge? Oh I'm not being smart — S & the B's are my very least favourite outfit and sound as plum pompous in German as they pain us with in Blighty. I dare say it's all part of some Euro-Parliament drive.

The flipside — as Pete Murray was wont to say — captures for all time the famed 'Love In A Void'. The romance crawls on.

GLADYS KNIGHT: You Bring Out The Best In Me (CBS). Over-exposure has aligned Glad with the Basseys and Streisands of this world and she's probably well happy. This is slightly less showbizzy than of late, with a modicum more spirit, and will chart. Ordinary, as it happens, and whither the Pips?

● **AND NOW, WILL YOU WELCOME . . . THE INDEPENDENTS!**

DOCENT DOD: Klockan Ett (Jakt import).
TOYS: My Mind Wanders (Toys)
PSYKIK VOLTS: Horror Stories No. 5 (Ellie Jay).
CLIVE CULBERTSON: Busy Signal (Rip Off).
REDUCERS: Man With Gun (Vibes).
HOT WATER: Get Lost (Duff). Grabbing this week's handful, I fight the rest back with a whip and a chair to await their turn next week. Get back there you! I said back — oh alright . . .

MARTTI LETHARGIE: Head Expansion (Heartwork). And that's all! OK, now.

Decent Dod arrive unidentified though I suspect from Sweden. It loses all once outside the home turf because it's no more than a Dire Straits with Stranglers affections. Sung in native schpeil, they demand only local attention.

Please, please check for The Toys' EP. They sound open and eager with some neat restraint in their songs, don't mind chancing acoustics nor treading the path between sharp cute and wimp cute. If 'Girl On My Wall' sounds wet it's because it's about a wally singing to a Debbie Harry Poster and is intentional. Elsewhere they may need to toughen a little, but once they've got that sorted out they can stuff Joe Jackson I'll wager. From St Albans, some essential pop songs — The Toys. Yours.

The Psykik Volts are a three-piece from Dewsbury near Leeds. Sorry and all that but they do sound like an unconfident support band from Dewsbury. The sound is stiff and limited on their single and they produce a balance somewhere between HM and jokey ghoul pop.

Clive Culbertson sounds as though it might just be a legit production and, again, will not cause anyone outside Portrush to operate the old turnstile on the wallet: manic paced sub-Motorhead with a tempering of Roy Wood vocals played overall in damning OK pubby sound.

The Reducers thunder down from Bury and their last EP on Vibes was a treasure. The light cocky attack has been replaced by a more confident — though less inspired — arrangement and the songs here are but very ordinary rock'n'roll that leans toward the over-heavy. Miss this but watch the follow-up.

The Hot Water combo (Rochdale) are more pleasing and their derivative though neat Get Lost' single is helped by dual female vocals and the saxophone inherent. Less edge than The Rezillos but well worth it. (The sleeve photo was a dreadful error though, my friends. Kaftans? College no doubt.)

Tail end Martti is our closer and is another Swede, this time sung in English — it's repetitive and draggy, recorded in the flattest of sounds. No, there's nowt in this show other than the excellent Toys to sway your ackers from this week's awesome collection of discotheque greats. Which reminds me . . .

● **SINGLE OF THE WEEK**

DEXTER WANSELL: I'll Never Forget My Favourite Disco (Philadelphia import 5:46). Our most restrained pearl this week. Typically Philly: lush plush, thick, dreamy and layered. 'INFMFD' is a cornball travelogue of the disco globe, so expertly syncopated we can forget our air hostess patter and strut all over that kicking rhythm. If it matters to you, this will feature in our wonderful Top Ten too. At anyrate, adjectives are probably bouncing off you like an adman's pitch right now so I might just add that all these SOTW came out of me own bin and that proves something I think.

TELEVISION: Little Johnny Jewel (Ork 12"). On one side you get the original 'LJJ' in its entirety; on the other side you

Forty fives to fortify you by DANNY BAKER

Pic: Joe Stevens

Chic —ahead of the field as ever. Pic: Tom Sheehan

Mavis Staples — we are (not) family, and we are heading for a summer smash.

Pic: Joe Stevens.

get a live recording of it wallowing in sub-bootleg sound. The basic line of this song has always struck me as being not unadjacent to 'Money' by Pink Floyd, but to many — large portions of this office included — it is a classic. I liked Television's first LP quite a bit but have always thought 'Little Johnny' as tiresome a piece of jamming as possible in this half of this decayed decade. To me all the rumoured 'emotion' is nowhere to be found and the dribbling of guitars suggests some soft brains somewhere. That it may have been recorded for tuppence in an infested cellar bears nought on what it sounds like or how you should view it. Empirical romanticism be dashed — only the drummer stops this record from being absolutely, irredeemably, positively, kippably dull. Maybe it makes sense when you're stoned, maaaaaa etc.

VILLAGE PEOPLE: Go West (Mercury). Not the best track to release as single from the 'Go West' LP. I'm not actually writing them off, but I would be surprised if they survive another album even if their 45s do continue to rattle around for another year at least. Films, TV and Dollars await them but inspiration was back them.

THE JONES GIRLS: You Gonna Make Me Love Somebody Else (Philadelphia).

RITZ: Locomotion (Epic).

ALTON MACLAIN AND DESTINY: It Must Be Love (Polydor). Y'see the titles above? Until the imports arrive it was out of the above as to what was the SOTW. They're great pop songs all and each worth investigation — which involves lugs to the radio, an earache I'll grant you.

The Jones Girls come on very strong with a Gamble/Huff song which has an opening not a million miles from Bill Withers' 'Lovely Day'. The track is bass perforated, discreet keyboards linking the tempered stop/go rhythm. The gals themselves, on this round anyway, might tend to Pointer Sisters it a bit but you can hear a more likely example in the fluid chorus than the verses. It's a fair song and they'll have a bigger hit when Philly release 'This Feeling's Killing Me' from their LP.

And Ritz . . . well Ritz is just a tatty, tacky old exploitation pop/disco version of Little Eva's never-to-be-forgotten. Its production is crisp, hot and immaculate, with a particularly good line in drums sound. Apart from the obvious carping it exists to give fun and as such, comes home hands down. OK, so they're coining it in you say — well at least they're not pissing us about with hopeless tat. 'Locomotion' is the best in its class.

And then to the best solarium of all. Long released, but now revamped and repromoted, full marks to Polydor for refusing to let Alton Maclain's gem so fine die without a fight. 'It Must Be Love' makes up the trio that started with The Emotions 'Best Of My Love', continued with Cheryl Lynn's neglected 'To Be Real' and has now blossomed with this. Built on descending piano chords and a not-too-polished vocal line, you are urged and pleaded with to snap this up. This is just about the best of this highly esteemed section.

● **And . . .**

PROTEX: I Can't Cope (Polydor). Their lyrics want to be hard but the songs want to be sweet. Some people just can't cope and *"don't wanna be alive/when I'm 25"*. Unremarkable big label signing from Belfast'n'back again.

THE JOLT: Maybe Tonight EP (Polydor). The Jolt — having been away — are back. Four tracks that have less bite than a swig of milk. The songs have a Moddish lean and to be fair, this group have been shadowing The Jam for longer than the rest. But it's all tame stuff, despite one track, 'See-Saw', being written by somebody called Weller.

THE ENID: Dam Busters March (Pye). Blue vinyl, white label with red centre. However that design has more to do with a Spitfire's markings here than any Mod revival. Just synthesizer versions of 'Dambusters' and 'Land Of Hope And Glory' done to sound like an orchestra. Now the bloke who could do it all on his mouth . . . he had something. The Enid have nothing to show but their undisputed ugliness.

JOHN MAYALL: Bottom Line (DJM). Old, old John done tried to git fonky. It sounds like a Geoff Love Orchestra having been asked for some young people's party music for a scene in a Dick Emery skit.

CANDI STATON: When You Wake Up Tomorrow (Warners).
CARRIE LUCAS: Dance With You (RCA Solar).
EVELYN 'CHAMPAGNE' KING: Music Box (RCA). Candi Staton will be lucky if she gets another 'Young Hearts'. She's been trying for quite a while now and this one is nowhere near it.

Carrie Lucas, on the other hand, inexplicably missed with her sublime 'Street Corner Symphony' last time out, yet is about to hit with this harder, even heavy, suite. It's a bit of a slogger, one of those average formulas that for no special reason takes off.

Evelyn King provides similar stuff but executed with a stack more class and boosted by some neat brass work.

THE INMATES: Dirty Water (Soho).
LEW LEWIS REFORMER: Win Or Lose (Stiff). You're gonna do your pieces. Here's another record you can't afford to pass on: The Inmates get down as good as they give live, just when you thought R&B was ready to cruise snoozin'. 'Dirty Water' will lift you up — The Inmates are the brand new guvnors of their game. Ridiculously honed, a 45 that — as Moped observed — will ripple though your system like a pack of steel balls.

Lew Lewis has the misfortune to be drawn in the same week or else I dare say would storm some himself. But for sound it's a one horse race. Heart, sweat and grit.

● **SINGLE OF THE WEEK:**

SOCCER: Come And Get It On (Salsoul import. 6:59). Just as necessary as Chic right at the top. Loaded pump full to the gills with flair and drive. I have no idea who Soccer are but their name does seem fitting. Soccer and Disco got the US by the throat — we give them our players, they ship over these kind of singles. More than fair. I'll wind up here before yet another record comes along to make my case for your budget-blowing seem even more undependable. Last words to Chic: *"Don't Be A Drag/Participate/Grab Some Of The Action/On Roller Skates . . ."*

THE SPECIALS
SINGLE OUT NOW
THE SPECIAL A.K.A. GANGSTERS VS. THE SELECTER.
THE TOUR
JULY 13 WOLVERHAMPTON LAYFAYETTE
JULY 14 LIVERPOOL ERICS
JULY 16 CHESTER SMARTIES BARNSLEY TECH.
JULY 21 ELECTRIC BALLROOM (2 TONE EVG)
JULY 24 NORWICH BOOGIE HOUSE
JULY 25 YORK POP CLUB
JULY 26 BISHOPS CASTLE 3 TONS
JULY 27 BIRMINGHAMS BARBARELLA'S
JULY 28 DUDLEY J.B.S
AUG. 1 NEWPORT STOWAWAYS
AUG. 3 SHEFFIELD LIMIT
AUG. 4 BLACKPOOL NORBRECK CASTLE
JUNE 22 LINCOLN A.J.S
JUNE 23 JACKSDALE GREY TOPPER
JUNE 26 HAMMERSMITH PALAIS
JUNE 27 BOURNEMOUTH TOWN HALL
JUNE 28 NASHVILLE
JUNE 29 NEWPORT VILLAGE (SHROPS.)
JUNE 30 CHELTENHAM WHITCOMBE LODGE
JULY 2 EDINBURGH TIFFANIES
JULY 3 ABERDEEN RUSSELLS
JULY 6 BOURNEMOUTH CAPONES
JULY 10 LEEDS F CLUB
JULY 11 SHREWSBURY CASCADE
2 TONE RECORDS
MARKETED BY Chrysalis RECORDS LIMITED

THE CRAMPS

Edgar Allan Poe meets Billie Lee Riley at the grassroots of Rockabilly.

NICK KENT meets the mid-west monsters neath the portals of Covent Garden.

JILL FURMANOVSKY raises crossed lens in defence.

CRAMPS I to r: Nick Knox, Ivy Rovschach, Lux Interior, Bryan Gregory . . . the Limeys will buy anything these days.

Tales Of American Gothick

THE TITLE of the film escapes me, but the scene itself has remained indelibly stained on my brainplate for all of nine years.

A strange '50s epic starring Bob Hope and mixing the latter's quick-quipped humour with a truly creepy sense of Gothic horror, the scene itself involves a Bayou swamp across which Hope is being taken by boat to a supposedly haunted mansion hidden deep in Creole mist.

The boat, creaking with suitable credulity, finally finds its mooring place at a make-shift jetty where two figures are dimly visible.

One lies prone, with eyes like catatonic beacons. . . deaf, mute, seemingly bereft of all his senses. This breathing corpse is a bonafide zombie. He lays in a coffin-shaped bed and is truly scarey to behold.

The second figure is the zombie's mother.

She also has luminous eyes and a quite fearsome presence. As the boat is tied to its mooring by a nerve-wracked yachtsman, Hope lurches up onto the creaking jetty to encounter the mother-zombie hovering, a lighted lantern held aloft to catch the full dread consequence of this encounter.

Hope stares at the coffin, at the breathing corpse within the blazing eyes, while a shiver whistles down the viewer's backbone. The silence is just too, too ominous to bear.

Then Hope, mustering what bravado he has left in reserve, looks squarely at the mother-zombie in the shuddering half-light of this voodoo black-out.

He speaks.

"Could I possibly interest you in a subscription to *Creepy Stories?*

Cue: 1979 — Sunday, The Lyceum. The Compere bellows at 9.15, "Would you welcome from New York City, the kings of rockabilly voodoo — Ladeezangentlemen, a big hand please for The Cramps!"

The Cramps, The Loud Covenants Of Cramped Style. . .

PREFACE: A cramped history of rockabilly, its aesthetics and creation.

If ever a term invented to define a style of rock music was misused and downright abused then "rockabilly" is that term.

Coined in the late '50s, most records made when that particular word was in vogue were nothing more nor less than half-baked attempts by mediocre country swing acts to inject a little urgency, a little relatively sedate 'pep', into their music to cash in on the sudden commercial viability of rock 'n' roll.

Comparisons contemporary or otherwise are worthless to present, this brand of rockabilly often fail to recognise this fact so that a representative collection features maybe 80 per cent of this spineless bastardised tripe to a criminally brief but nonetheless invigoratingly blitzed-up 20 per cent of the real deal.

This 'real deal' as such was purveyed by the likes of Billy Lee Riley ('Red Hot' and 'Flying Saucers Rock 'n' Roll' are 14-carat masterpieces of the genre), Jack Scott ('The Way I Walk' is his most renowned work, another exquisite example of the rockabilly spirit) and Johnny Burnette ('Honey Hush', 'Lonesome Train', 'Train Kept A-Rollin'.') and Mac Curtis.

These four, anyway, are certainly the most famous bonafide acts plugging away at the godforsaken precincts of this crazed style.

However the basic rockabilly style was represented by other, now long-forsaken acts who adhered to the principles of the music's crazed style. These neglected geniuses didn't need to 'understand' the music — they were making it because rockabilly, by its definition, is indefinable, nigh impossible to latch onto by means of strategy.

It is simply rock primitivism at its most 'crazed' at its most blazingly illogical, at its most 'gone'. Lyrics are of minimal importance, for example. Instead, the music is a psyched-up shuddering splurge of adrenalin-pumping dementia, with the singer spewing forth reams of garbled rant so brain-bell whacked out he sounds like he's facing off all the demons Robert Johnson had driving him down, down, down to the murky depths of hell.

It is psychotic music, demented and truly godforsaken as only music created in an environment — principally the Bible Belt Southern States of the late '50s — where rock 'n' roll was regarded as strictly 'devil's music', where the likes of Charlie Strarkweather, a mass murderer of the Richard Speck mould, would gun up his mobile and drive around raping and strangling Southern belles, legend had it, by the sound of Jerry Lee Lewis' 'Great Balls Of Fire' playing over his car radio.

And on the outer fringes of the music were artefacts, the likes of a song called "Rockin' Bones", first performed by Ronnie Dawson, "the Blonde Bomber of Memphis, Tenessee," later to be covered by another little-known but equally stunningly named aggregate known as the Rhythm Bandits, the lyrics to which proudly exclaimed: *"When I die don't bury me at all/Just nail my bones up on the wall/Beneath my bones let these words be seen/This is the bloody gears of a boppin' machine."*

LUX INTERIOR, a gangling, gawky figure who on first viewing looks like a somewhat disarming mutated offspring of Montgomery Clift and Mr. Ed the talking horse, is in full locquacious swing as he stops momentarily to inquire something of Bryan Gregory, fellow Cramp and quite the most. . . um. . . striking looking figure I've witnessed since 1975, when Keith Richard was at his most terminally junked-out and would regularly emblazon his sickeningly chalky-white angular face with a mass of turbans and white framed sunglasses until he bore an uncanny resemblance to the human skull Screamin' Jay Hawkins once carried around on a pole as part of his stage act.

Gregory, however, needs only a fraction of the latter's facial embelishments for his effect — to be more precise, a set of human bones worn around his neck.

The rest of his visual is achieved by a long bleached swathe of hair totally covering one side of a face so gaunt it looks like his cheeks were connected by one medium-size voodoo pin.

Equally unsettling is Gregory's complete serenity of manner, his voice always remaining at one speciously gentle pitch strictly at odds with a pair of eyes so venomous-looking that, replete with the gamut of tatoos covering his arms, Gregory looks like he walked out of the human snake-pit of a Todd Browning film.

"Hey Bryan, was it Jim Dickinson or Knox Phillips who told us that story about how Elvis *really* got his first break at Sun Records?" enquires Lux.

"It was Knox", replies Bryan, in the same unsettling serene tone that he was using when, before the interuption, he was calmly telling one of the party sequestered at this interie how "you've just got to understand that 90 per cent of the people living in New York are completely crazy. I mean, homicidally crazy!"

Ah, ha, Knox Phillips. This is paramount to pronouncing the up-coming tale as the acorn gospel because Knox Phillips is the son of Sam Phillips and everybody knows that Sam Phillips was the gent who owned Sun Records back there in the '50s and who hit pay dirt by discovering, so the official story goes, one Elvis Aaron Presley, truckdriver, while looking for a white boy with a negro sounding voice.

The 'official' story is also very wishy-washy and too damn coincidental to really be swallowed whole.

The version Phillips' son told The Cramps one drunken night is rather more entertainingly believable.

"Yeah, we were told that Elvis wasn't *discovered* as such at all! He was just some freaky-looking kid always making a nuisance of himself around Sun Studios and nobody wanted to know him. Like, here's this guy who dyed his fuckin' eyebrows and dressed in black pimp clothes — and this was the '50s in the South, you've got to remember — and Sam Phillips and all the session guys thought he was some disgusting little faggot!

"However Elvis did have this one piece of luck. His mother, right, had a really bad weight problem and the doctor prescribed her this enormous supply of diet pills which just happened to be. . . these pills were just pure benzedrine, right, which is a very potent form of speed.

"And all those Sun guys just *lived* on speed, man. So when Phillips found out that Elvis could get bottles of these things, he let him hang around. So, like, here was Elvis every week bringing *huge* bottles of these pills to the guys at Sun until, as he was the studio's main source of supply for speed, Phillips was more or less obliged to let him cut a record.

"So like, rock 'n' roll was born simply because Elvis Presley was Sun Records' number one speed dealer."

Like that story? (screw you if you don't, you slimey dope. Go on and read about some bunch of cold. musick tossers for all I care, or how Lester Bangs met Tom Verlaine in a laundromat. Jesus, the shit that gets in these pages these days. . .)

Well, The Cramps've got a million of 'em. Great stories about how Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash used to stay up for five days dropping bennies and singing gospel tunes that would get more and more manic until the first one flipped out and did something like Jerry Lee used to do a lot — i.e. when the mood and chemicals caught him he'd pull out his machine gun and blow out the entire recording consul.

Or how when The Cramps first met Sam Phillips himself he appeared from nowhere wielding a huge chainsaw still in full-tilt operation.

BUT, BEFORE things get a little out of hand hereabouts, perhaps it'd be wise to frame all this dementia with some tempering contextual paraphernalia.

This is basically a piece about The Cramps, a four-piece band based in New York consisting of three guys — Lux Interior, vocalist/frontman, Bryan Gregory on polka-dot flying V Jap copy guitar, Nick Knox on drums and one lady, Ms. Ivy Rorschach, also on guitar.

There is no bass-player, which can sometimes be a little aurally disconcerting, although on a good night the kicking-mule of a bass drum coupled with the two guitarists' attention to working on the lower frets of their instruments compensates more than adequately.

The Cramps are a self-confessed rock 'n' roll band, basing their pulsebeat on the genuine nerve-shuddering crunch of ornate rockabilly, a form of music all four — though most particularly Lux and Ivy — are intimately acquainted with due to an obsessive devotion to collecting rare vinyl artefacts of the genre.

However, unlike many aggregates similarly tied to performing a form of music generally considered long dead, The Cramps baulk at being considered reactionaries, fervently believing, on the contrary, that the basic spirit of rockabilly as they both view and practice it is the well-spring of a pure rock 'n' roll essence.

In practice, their sound can be seen as utilizing a similar feel and tension as that of The Ramones. Also like The Ramones, their songs appear, superficially anyway, to sound all very much one of a kind.

The comparison, however, goes further — in that beneath the veneer there lies a unique maverick essence that seems all too easy to emulate but in fact is nothing of the sort.

In the two years that the band have been active, various labels have been tossed around in attempts to nail their trashy juggernaut twitch of a pulsebeat — replete with songs toting handles like 'I Was A Teenage Werewolf', 'Human Fly', 'The Nations Are Restless' and 'Don't Eat Off The Sidewalk' — as 'punkabilly'. The only label they actively condone, however is there own definition — "Rockabilly and in particular 'psychobilly Voodoo". The 'Voodoo' reference is no mere caprice or gimmick, by the way. Neither is their music meant as a parody or pastiche of the original form.

For this and other reasons, beyond their hard-core cult following in the Big A. The Cramps are currently regarded in many cliquish quarters of Manhattan as 'contemptible', principally amongst the 'no-wave music' crowd currently somewhat in vogue. The band in turn regard these detractors as equally beneath contempt.

All of which leads somewhat haphazardly up to the band's current sojourn in Britain where, through the patronage of Miles Copeland (himself regarded as a controversial entrepreneurial figure in some quarters of this city) they have been gigging regularly, either supporting The Police or else themselves bill-topping in clubs.

The tour thus far has been regarded by the band with, to say the least, mixed feelings. Their aim, you see, is simply to set off a reaction, be it negative or positive, between themselves and the audience. Lux as the frontman is particularly adamant about this and uses the word "spontaneity" an awful lot when discussing the matter. That and the word "danger".

It's a mixed blessing, then, that the first time we meet it just happens to be the evening of the worst concert they've had the misfortune to play. The Lyceum on Sunday June 10 is the location for this dread affair where The Cramps, squashed between one Bobby Henry and the bill-topping Police, face an audience bent on doing a perfect en masse impersonation of a brick-wall for the voodoo they do.

Never has an audience been more black, more sedate, more unmoved. It's hard to tell exactly why this display of apathy should occur. Visually, after all, the band virtually demand some sort of action. Musically, too, their sound this night seems to pour down from the roof like aural moulten lead. But it's all to no avail and lux Interior, in particular, having given as much as he can muster, looks defeated by the blank stares little more than half way through a 40 minute set.

By the end, it's down to half-hearted gestures — timorous blasts of feed-back, some twists and false starts-and-stops, but. . . but. . .

BACKSTAGE, THE band are visibly depressed. A clumsy enquiry as to marks out of ten for the show receives a feisty "minus ten" from Lux, who seems quite lost in a sort of befuddled confusion by the defeat. Evidently, he can't surmise whose fault it was or even whether the question of who to blame comes into it.

As a result, each member seems to accentuate his or her own particular personal idiosyncracy.

Knox, the drummer, is acting like a pressure cooker on the boil and ready to explode at any given moment. He stomps around, walking up and down in a state of hyper-frustration about anything and everything.

Ivy wears shades and gives of vibes so cold one expects icicles to form on the mirror directly next to her. And Bryan. . . well Bryan is simply serenity personified.

Things start getting seriously out of kilter when a movie is made by the band, yours truly, his small entourage to wander over to a restaurant situated directly opposite the Lyceum's backstage exit.

Knox is now fuming to the point where one almost expects steam to pour from his ears, Ivy just remains silent — her angular shades and cruelly poised mouth speaking volumes, Bryan is. . . well just Bryan and Lux. . . Lux?

"Someone go find Lux. He's disappeared somewhere," muttered one of the band disinterestedly. I do the honours only to locate the vocalist sequestered in some twilight zone of his own formulation, wandering aimlessly down a dark street away from the restaurant. Decidedly out to lunch.

Not that the thick-lensed shades help matters.

Once inside, Knox is getting *very, very, very* uptight about what appears to be the lack of menu in this classy gaff. "Where's the fuckin' menu? I mean. . . ah fuck this! I mean, fuck it all! The fuckin' hotel we're stayin' in the fuckers there can't understand a fuckin' word I say. I mean, I know I ain't got much brain but. . ."

The menu is located. It is written on the wall.

"Fuckin' ridiculous," snarls Knox.

This process is repeated when Lux arrives. After 20 minutes of this discomfort, having eaten their repasts as speedily as possible, Knox and Ivy Rorschach depart speedily into the night.

Lux, having regained communication with the outside world, becomes quite locquacious. While the foursome were present he'd detailed historical trivia: detail like the innumerable selection of crummy menial jobs he and Ivy, both expatriates from Missouri, had been in prior to Crampdom — "like, oh making surfing boards."

"I was son of Jack of all trades" (yeah, a "Jack-off" of all trades, Knox sniggered back).

He also listed all the drummers The Cramps had used prior to Knox's joining.

"First we had Bryan's sister — she called herself Pam Balam — she was great but she . . . uh didn't really like it. Then there was another girl . . . uh, Miriam . . . Miriam Linna . . . but we didn't get on too well. She thought we were . . . uh . . . what's the word she used to call us, Ivy? Ivy? Oh yeah, "loose". We were too 'loose' for her (laughs gawkily to himself).

"Like, we had this rehearsal place which we named — there was this big sign, right, which read 'The Cramps' Home For Wayward Boys And Girls'. (Laughs again). Then they shut it down and threw us out."

Although he was the only member of The Cramps who'd played in a band professionally beforehand, Knox's enlistment was typically bizarre.

"Yea, he came up from Cleveland with eight or nine other guys. They all came round me and Ivy's place one night and he (Knox) was the only one who talked to Ivy."

This was taken as a good omen.

TALK TURNS from Cramp history to the overwhelming desire for audiences reactions at Cramps' gigs. Lux claims the band aren't interested in "getting really big . . . y' 'know. I mean, having to play big halls would just defeat the whole purpose of what we're trying to achieve."

OK, I counter, but surely this desire for a reaction — any reaction — must have led you into some potentially very ugly situations.

"Oh, yeah," retorts Lux earnestly. "There was this one gig in New York where the audience was just invaded by all these skinheads. Like, skinheads in the States are totally different to what they are here, right. Mostly they're ex-paratroopers who've found gangs and who're really evil.

"Anyway we were playing and they just stomped the shit out of — well, not us so much but Bradley (well-known N.Y. 'character' and drummer with Teenage Jesus & The Jerks, a band who evolved from being charter members of The Cramps' fan club although nowadays 'T. Jesus' have apparently turned actively against The Cramps, particularly lead singer, one Ms. Lydia Lunch) got the shit beaten out of him. So did James."

James is James Chance or Black, another ex-Cramps fan, about whom more can be gleaned elsewhere in this ish.

The Cramps, however, didn't suffer too badly in physical assault stakes themselves. That in itself is an interesting phenomenon that will be dealt with later. Meantimes, talk turns to Alex Chilton, boy genius, guiding light of Big Star, the figure behind a thousand strange and lurid tales and, according to Lux, "a guy blessed with . . . I don't know what . . . something anyway! He's done the most reckless, suicidal things and gotten clean away. Talk about a cat having nine lives. Alex must have 90."

Chilton saw the Cramps in New York and his Memphis-bred rocker consciousness clicked immediately with the band's particular sound and vision. Declaring them "the greatest rock 'n' roll group in the world", he took them to Memphis to produce a brace of tracks that have been released as singles in the States and which make up 'The Cramps' Greatest Hits' package that Miles Copeland's label is issuing any day now.

Chilton's reputation in Memphis is apparently one of uniquely awesome proportions. Half-beloved, half-hated, Lux claims that when news of the band flying in with Chilton to the latter's home-town hit the city, "There were guys with guns, man . . . all sorts of crazy things."

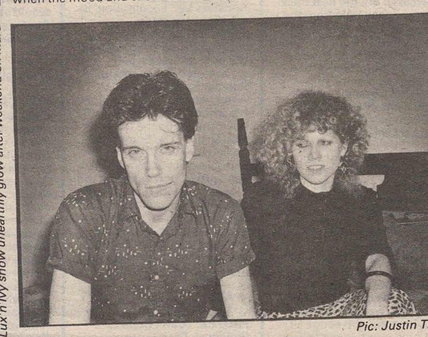
The reasons for Chilton's epic hometown notoriety have something to do with "the fact that he's probably fucked just about every chick in the state. Literally. And those chicks' boyfriends are out to get him."

Chilton, however, like a proverbial Jesus, sunbeam, floats along, usually totally drunk and mostly drugged out that all threats — "literally hundreds" maintains Lux — wash over him like water off a duck's arse.

"He's the greatest liar I've ever met too", continues the Cramp. "Like, he'd drive us out to where he claimed "the real blues was born" or something (laughs) and it'd be some old shack! And you knew he was jiving you but you'd go along with it 'cos he was so damn funny."

Continues over

"We don't make up voodoo dolls and stick pins in them. That's just complete crap ... I'd say we were more into white magic."



Lux 'n' Ivy show unearthly glow after weekend on Mars

Pic: Justin Thomas

THE CRAMPS

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It is simply rock primitivism at its most 'crazed' at its most blazingly illogical, at its most 'gone'. Lyrics are of minimal importance, for example. Instead, the music is a psyched-up shuddering splurge of adrenalin-pumping dementia, with the singer spewing forth reams of garbled rant so brain-bell whacked out he sounds like he's facing off all the demons Robert Johnson had driving him down, down, down to the murky depths of hell.

It is psychotic music, demented and truly godforsaken as only music created in an environment — principally the Bible Belt Southern States of the late '50s — where rock 'n' roll was regarded as strictly 'devil's music', where the likes of Charlie Strarkweather, a mass murderer of the Richard Speck mould, would gun up his mobile and drive around raping and strangling Southern belles, legend had it, by the sound of Jerry Lee Lewis' 'Great Balls Of Fire' playing over his car radio.

And on the outer fringes of the music were artefacts, the likes of a song called "Rockin' Bones", first performed by Ronnie Dawson, "the Blonde Bomber of Memphis, Tenessee," later to be covered by another little-known but equally stunningly named aggregate known as the Rhythm Bandits, the lyrics to which proudly exclaimed: *"When I die don't bury me at all/Just nail my bones up on the wall/Beneath my bones let these words be seen/This is the bloody gears of a boppin' machine."*

LUX INTERIOR, a gangling, gawky figure who on first viewing looks like a somewhat disarming mutated offspring of Montgomery Clift and Mr. Ed the talking horse, is in full locquacious swing as he stops momentarily to inquire something of Bryan Gregory, fellow Cramp and quite the most. . . um. . . striking looking figure I've witnessed since 1975, when Keith Richard was at his most terminally junked-out and would regularly emblazon his sickeningly chalky-white angular face with a mass of turbans and white framed sunglasses until he bore an uncanny resemblance to the human skull Screamin' Jay Hawkins once carried around on a pole as part of his stage act.

Gregory, however, needs only a fraction of the latter's facial embellishments for his effect — to be more precise, a set of human bones worn around his neck.

The rest of his visual is achieved by a long bleached swathe of hair totally covering one side of a face so gaunt it looks like his cheeks were connected by one medium-size voodoo pin.

Equally unsettling is Gregory's complete serenity of manner, his voice always remaining at one speciously gentle pitch strictly at odds with a pair of eyes so venomous-looking that, replete with the gamut of tatoos covering his arms, Gregory looks like he walked out of the human snake-pit of a Todd Browning film.

"Hey Bryan, was it Jim Dickinson or Knox Phillips who told us that story about how Elvis *really* got his first break at Sun Records?" enquires Lux.

"It was Knox", replies Bryan, in the same unsettling serene tone that he was using when, before the interuption, he was calmly telling one of the party sequestered at this eyerie how "you've just got to understand that 90 per cent of the people living in New York are completely crazy. I mean, homicidally crazy!"

Ah, ha, Knox Phillips. This is paramount to pronouncing the up-coming tale as the acorn gospel because Knox Phillips is the son of Sam Phillips and everybody knows that Sam Phillips was the gent who owned Sun Records back there in the '50s and who hit pay dirt by discovering, so the official story goes, one Elvis Aaron Presley, truckdriver, while looking for a white boy with a negro sounding voice.

The 'official' story is also very wishy-washy and too damn coincidental to really be swallowed whole.

The version Phillips' son told The Cramps one drunken night is rather more entertainingly believable.

"Yeah, we were told that Elvis wasn't *discovered* as such at all! He was just some freaky-looking kid always making a nuisance of himself around Sun Studios and nobody wanted to know him. Like, here's this guy who dyed his fuckin' eyebrows and dressed in black pimp clothes — and this was the '50s in the South, you've got to remember — and Sam Phillips and all the session guys thought he was some disgusting little faggot!

"However Elvis did have this one piece of luck. His mother, right, had a really bad weight problem and the doctor prescribed her this enormous supply of diet pills which just happened to be. . . these pills were just pure benzedrine, right, which is a very potent form of speed.

"And all those Sun guys just *lived* on speed, man. So when Phillips found out that Elvis could get bottles of these things, he let him hang around. So, like, here was Elvis every week bringing *huge* bottles of these pills to the guys at Sun until, as he was the studio's main source of supply for speed, Phillips was more or less obliged to let him cut a record.

"So like, rock 'n' roll was born simply because Elvis Presley was Sun Records' number one speed dealer."

Like that story? (screw you if you don't, you slimey dope. Go on and read about some bunch of cold musick tossers for all I care, or how Lester Bangs met Tom Verlaine in a laundromat. Jesus, the shit that gets in these pages these days. . .)

Well, The Cramps've got a million of 'em. Great stories about how Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash used to stay up for five days dropping bennies and singing gospel tunes that would get more and more manic until the first one flipped out and did something like Jerry Lee used to do a lot — i.e. when the mood and chemicals caught him he'd pull out his machine gun and blow out the entire recording consul.

Or how when The Cramps first met Sam Phillips himself he appeared from nowhere wielding a huge chainsaw still in full-tilt operation.

BUT, BEFORE things get a little out of hand hereabouts, perhaps it'd be wise to frame all this dementia with some tempering contextual paraphernalia.

This is basically a piece about The Cramps, a four-piece band based in New York consisting of three guys — Lux Interior, vocalist/frontman, Bryan Gregory on polka-dot flying V Jap copy guitar, Nick Knox on drums and one lady, Ms. Ivy Rorschach, also on guitar.

There is no bass-player, which can sometimes be a little aurally disconcerting, although on a good night the kicking-mule of a bass drum coupled with the two guitarists' attention to working on the lower frets of their instruments compensates more than adequately.

The Cramps are a self-confessed rock 'n' roll band, basing their pulsebeat on the genuine nerve-shuddering crunch of ornate rockabilly, a form of music all four — though most particularly Lux and Ivy — are intimately acquainted with due to an obsessive devotion to collecting rare vinyl artefacts of the genre.

However, unlike many aggregates similarly tied to performing a form of music generally considered long dead, The Cramps baulk at being considered reactionaries, fervently believing, on the contrary, that the basic spirit of rockabilly as they both view and practice it is the well-spring of a pure rock 'n' roll essence.

In practice, their sound can be seen as utilizing a similar feel and tension as that of The Ramones. Also like The Ramones, their songs appear, superficially anyway, to sound all very much one of a kind.

The comparison, however, goes further — in that beneath the veneer there lies a unique maverick essence that seems all too easy to emulate but in fact is nothing of the sort.

In the two years that the band have been active, various labels have been tossed around in attempts to nail their trashy juggernaut twitch of a pulsebeat — replete with songs toting handles like 'I Was A Teenage Werewolf', 'Human Fly', 'The Nations Are Restless' and 'Don't Eat Off The Sidewalk' — as 'punkabilly'. The only label they actively condone, however is there own definition — "Rockabilly band in particular 'psychobilly Voodoo". The 'Voodoo' reference is no mere caprice or gimmick, by the way. Neither is their music meant as a parody or pastiche of the original form.

For this and other reasons, beyond their hard-core cult following in the Big A. The Cramps are currently regarded in many cliquish quarters of Manhattan as 'contemptible', principally amongst the 'no-wave music' crowd currently somewhat in vogue. The band in turn regard these detractors as equally beneath contempt.

All of which leads somewhat haphazardly up to the band's current sojourn in Britain where, through the patronage of Miles Copeland (himself regarded as a controversial entrepreneurial figure in some quarters of this city) they have been gigging regularly, either supporting The Police or else themselves bill-topping in clubs.

The tour thus far has been regarded by the band with, to say the least, mixed feelings. Their aim, you see, is simply to set off a reaction, be it negative or positive, between themselves and the audience. Lux as the frontman is particularly adamant about this and uses the word "spontaneity" an awful lot when discussing the matter. That and the word "danger".

It's a mixed blessing, then, that the first time we meet it just happens to be the evening of the worst concert they've had the misfortune to play. The Lyceum on Sunday June 10 is the location for this dread affair where The Cramps, squashed between one Bobby Henry and the bill-topping Police, face an audience bent on doing a perfect en masse impersonation of a brick-wall for the voodoo they do.

Never has an audience been more black, more sedate, more unmoved. It's hard to tell exactly why this display of apathy should occur. Visually, after all, the band virtually demand some sort of action. Musically, too, their sound this night seems to pour down from the roof like aural moulten lead. But it's all to no avail and lux Interior, in particular, having given as much as he can muster, looks defeated by the blank stares little more than half way through a 40 minute set.

By the end, it's down to half-hearted gestures — timorous blasts of feed-back, some twists and false starts-and-stops, but. . . but. . .

BACKSTAGE, THE band are visibly depressed. A clumsy enquiry as to marks out of ten for the show receives a feisty "minus ten" from Lux, who seems quite lost in a sort of befuddled confusion by the defeat. Evidently, he can't surmise whose fault it was or even whether the question of who to blame comes into it.

As a result, each member seems to accentuate his or her own particular personal idiosyncracy.

Knox, the drummer, is acting like a pressure cooker on the boil and ready to explode at any given moment. He stomps around, walking up and down in a state of hyper-frustration about anything and everything.

Ivy wears shades and gives of vibes so cold one expects icicles to form on the mirror directly next to her. And Bryan. . . well Bryan is simply serenity personified.

Things start getting seriously out of kilter when a move is made by the band, yours truly, his small entourage to wander over to a restaurant situated directly opposite the Lyceum's backstage exit.

Knox is now fuming to the point where one almost expects steam to pour from his ears, Ivy just remains silent — her angular shades and cruelly poised mouth speaking volumes, Bryan is. . . well just Bryan and Lux. . . Lux?

"Someone go find Lux. He's disappeared somewhere," muttered one of the band disinterestedly. I do the honours only to locate the vocalist sequestered in some twilight zone of his own formulation, wandering aimlessly down a dark street away from the restaurant. Decidedly out to lunch.

Not that the thick-lensed shades help matters.

Once inside, Knox is getting *very, very, very* uptight about what appears to be the lack of menu in this classy gaff. "Where's the fuckin' menu? I mean. . . ah fuck this! I mean, fuck it all! The fuckin' hotel we're stayin' in the fuckin' hotel can't understand a fuckin' word I say. I mean, I know I ain't got much brain but. . ."

The menu is located. It is written on the wall.

"Fuckin' ridiculous," snarls Knox.

This process is repeated when Lux arrives. After 20 minutes of this discomfort, having eaten their repasts as speedily as possible, Knox and Ivy Rorschach depart speedily into the night.

Lux, having regained communication with the outside world, becomes quite locquacious. While the four-some were present he'd detailed historical trivia: detail like the innumerable selection of crummy martial tabs he and Ivy, both expatriates from Missouri, had been in prior to Crampdom — "like, oh making surfing boards."

"I was son of Jack of all trades, yeah, a 'Jack-off' of all trades," Knox sniggered back).

He also listed all the drummers The Cramps had used prior to Knox's joining.

"First we had Bryan's sister — she called herself Pam Balam — she was great but she . . . uh didn't really like it. Then there was another girl . . . uh, Miriam . . . Miriam Linna . . . but we didn't get on too well. She thought we were . . . uh . . . what's the word she used to call us, Ivy? Ivy? Oh yeah, "loose". We were too 'loose' for her (laughs gawkily to himself).

"Like, we had this rehearsal place which we named — there was this big sign, right, which read 'The Cramps' Home For Wayward Boys And Girls'. (Laughs again). Then they shut it down and threw us out."

Although he was the only member of The Cramps who'd played in a band professionally beforehand, Knox's enlistment was typically bizarre.

"Yea, he came up from Cleveland with eight or nine other guys. They all came round me and Ivy's place one night and he (Knox) was the only one who talked to Ivy."

This was taken as a good omen.

TALK TURNS from Cramp history to the overwhelming desire for audiences reactions at Cramps' gigs. Lux claims the band aren't interested in "getting really big . . . y' 'know. I mean, having to play big halls would just defeat the whole purpose of what we're trying to achieve."

OK, I counter, but surely this desire for a reaction — any reaction — must have led you into some potentially very ugly situations.

"Oh, yeah," retorts Lux earnestly. "There was this one gig in New York where the audience was just invaded by all these skinheads. Like, skinheads in the States are totally different to what they are here, right. Mostly they're ex-paratroopers who've found gangs and who're really evil.

"Anyway we were playing and they just stomped the shit out of — well, not us so much but Bradley (well-known N.Y. 'character' and drummer with Teenage Jesus & The Jerks, a band who evolved from being charter members of The Cramps' fan club although nowadays 'T. Jesus' have apparently turned actively against The Cramps, particularly lead singer, one Ms. Lydia Lunch) got the shit beaten out of him. So did James."

James is James Chance or Black, another ex-Cramps fan, about whom more can be gleaned elsewhere in this ish.

The Cramps, however, didn't suffer too badly in physical assault stakes themselves. That in itself is an interesting phenomenon that will be dealt with later. Meantimes, talk turns to Alex Chilton, boy genius, guiding light of Big Star, the figure behind a thousand strange and lurid tales and, according to Lux, "a guy blessed with . . . I don't know what . . . something anyway! He's done the most reckless, suicidal things and gotten clean away. Talk about a cat having nine lives. Alex must have 90."

Chilton saw the Cramps in New York and his Memphis-bred rocker consciousness clicked immediately with the band's particular sound and vision. Declaring them "the greatest rock 'n' roll group in the world", he took them to Memphis to produce a brace of tracks that have been released as singles in the States and which make up 'The Cramps' Greatest Hits' package that Miles Copeland's label is issuing any day now.

Chilton's reputation in Memphis is apparently one of uniquely awesome proportions. Half-beloved, half-hated, Lux claims that when news of the band flying in with Chilton to the latter's home-town hit the city, "There were guys with guns, man . . . all sorts of crazy things."

The reasons for Chilton's epic hometown notoriety have something to do with "the fact that he's probably fucked just about every chick in the state. Literally. And those chicks' boyfriends are out to get him."

Chilton, however, like a proverbial Jesus' sunbeam, floats along, usually so totally drunk and dosed up on prior to Cramppdom — "like, poly-drugged out that all threats — literally hundreds" maintains Lux — wash over him like water off a duck's arse.

"He's the greatest liar I've ever met too", continues the Cramp. "Like, he'd drive us out to where he claimed "the real blues was born" or something (laughs) and it'd be some old shack! And you knew he was jiving you but you'd go along with it 'cos he was so damn funny."

Continues over

"We don't make up voodoo dolls and stick pins in them. That's just complete crap ... I'd say we were more into white magic."

Lux n'Ivy show unearthly glow after weekend on Mars

Pic: Justin Thomas

THE CRAMPS

Continued

Such was Chilton's rep. in Memphis that when The Cramps played a gig there they attracted a crowd of easily 1000 just on the prestigious link-up with Chilton.

"He's a real Southern boy is Alex. He believes in the Lord and the Lord sure as hell takes care of him. I mean, one night he was so fucked up on booze and drugs he pissed on his electric cable — like there was 1,000 volts of electricity open and he just urinated on all these open wires. Anyone else would've been burnt to a crisp, but not Alex."

The band haven't seen Chilton for maybe a year now. "We've heard he's playing in a band called Panthers Blazing. He's not singing or writing songs. Just playing on guitar. He says he won't be doing either until he can find a good reason to start up again."

Meanuimes Chilton apparently has burnt out just a little too many of his lives as far as his homestate is concerned. "We hear that there's no way he can return to Memphis right now. No way at all."

OMINOUS WORDS. The Cramps may well be the most 'ominous' group I've ever encountered — a feeling that becomes a distinct reality when I encounter them again, exactly seven days later. Another Sunday and lo, another Lyceum date squeezed between The Police and Bobbie Henry.

The previous night Bryan fell over some piping and smashed up some back teeth, exposing several nerves and causing the band to rush around sleepy London town looking for antedotes for the pain.

Now a more formal interview takes place with Lux and Ivy. "the formal spokespeople" of The Cramps.

Ivy and Lux are getting used to these minor disasters, however and believe they're due to the fact that they went against the advice of an ageing homosexual couple known as "Don and Donald" who foretold the future via tarot card readings and whose prophesies the couple (Ivy and Lux) heed with the strictest reverence.

"Sometimes we've gone against what they've told us because it's seemed so ludicrous but they've always been proved right," quoth Ivy.

It seems that Don and Donald had certain reservations about The Cramps making the trip to England. "They said very firmly that we shouldn't record an album here."

Time, then, to check ouu the voodoo entanglement that The Cramps have drawn attention to in referring to their music as "rockabilly voodoo".

This, they earnestly maintain, is no cheap hype. Nor are they dabblers or dilettantes. The example of The Rolling Stones and the culminative effects of Altamont is used as representation of the latter breed and the inevitable mayhem that dabbling in magic can create.

"This is something we have gone into deeply and studied. We have not abused it and are incredibly wary of the dabblers because they are the ones who can really cause grief."

Ms. Rorschach expounds on the latter subject with a couple of examples.

"Once we were playing a gig in Washington D.C. and there's this cult who follow a band called The Steel Tips and literally it was something straight out of *Night Of The Living Dead*. Like, there were these bodies coming at us and I looked over at Nick the drummer 'cos he's the first to jump into the fray when things get out of control.

"And he just . . . I don't know how he did it but he somehow leapt over his kit and started fighting this crowd. Fortunately we got out of there before things got really bloody, but that came really close to it.

"Also there was a time in our appartment when I'd been drinking and was pretty spaced out and some chick we didn't know was drawing signs and stuff and there again I felt like I was really out of control."

"Yeah," adds Lux. "Things were flying off the walls. It was just getting far too out of control to deal with."

"But mostly", Ivy continues, "I feel like I've got this shield around me. I feel protected. It's down to really knowing what you're doing, understanding it and not abusing it. Like when we use words like 'Spontaneous' and 'danger', it sounds like we could be dabblers. But, believe me, we're very, very concerned about exactly what vibe we give off. I'd say that we were more into white magic."

Mumbo Gumbo from Bryan Gregory

Rumours had circulated about the band sacrificing animals before gigs

And playing around with voodoo symbols for vicarious effect. Ivy dismisses these charges as lies. "Now *that's* just what dabblers would do. No, all that is ridiculous. We don't make up voodoo dolls and stick pins in them. That's just complete crap as well as being impotent."

And that's as far as I personally wish to take the subject, beyond denoting that what the Cramps are into those particular precincts, they seem to hold together. With Ivy and Lux obviously the instigators they maintain that both Bryan Gregory and Nick Knox are aware of the forces and trust the couple, even if they don't fully understand the implications. As for the personalities of the other two, the couple remark that drummer Knox's uptightness, although superficially a touch unnerving, is not a serious problem either for him or the group. And as for Bryan — who has seen a number of psychiatrists' couches in his time — well, his serene demeanour is for real but were he to 'flip' he'd be infinitely more dangerous than Knox, say.

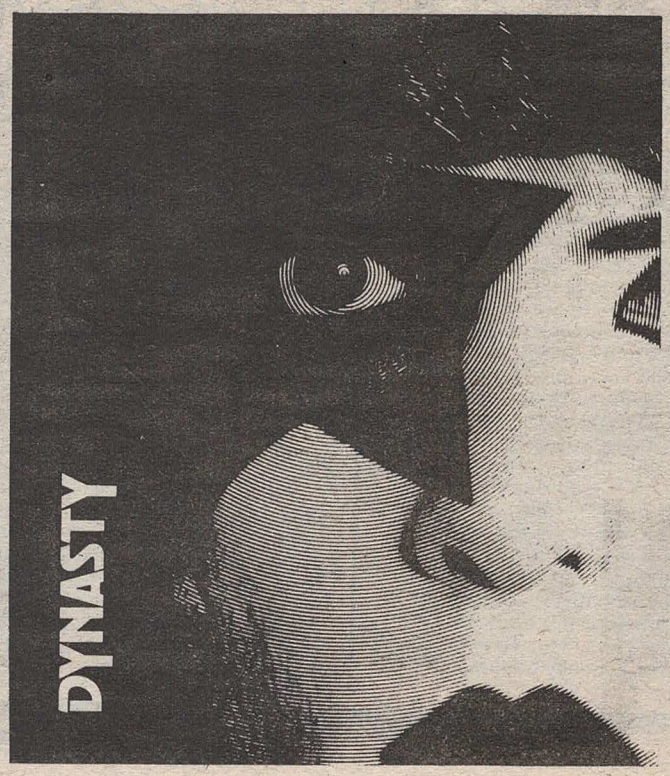
"He has it under control tho' ", remarks Lux earnestly. "I mean, he's the first to see it coming and he'll do anything to avoid getting wound-up. I've seen him run away from fights simply because he knows he's one of those guys who, if cornered, will attack and go all the way. Nick, on the other hand well, his uptightness is far more to the fore but by the same token it is ultimately far less dangerous."

THESE are the Cramps then. As personalities alone, they're more than intriguing and musically they're the very antithesis of the reactionaries some would claim. Because, beneath the slogans there's a musical essence — the Cramps are after all the first and foremost exponents of a new form of rockabilly that could rejuvenate that particular very potent pulsebeat in a way that — and here I take a deep breath and go way over the top — Marley & The Wailers did for reggae. As a form, rockabilly has had only the most fleeting of moments, a few stray glimpses be they in the form of one-off hits like "Jungle Rock" or mere glib references to the term a la Gen X.

As a form it's been abused more than anything else —I recall with acute embarrassment Patti Smith referring to her band's burgeoning sound as "Rastabilly" (the record that followed was "Radio Ethiopia': so much for that crap). Right now, the Cramps are out on their own but their music has spiritual connections with similar maverick and under-marketed works by the likes of the incredible Roky Erickson and Captain Beefheart's 'Bat Chain Puller'. And more than anything else, these outfits are creating a new music that doesn't need to rely on synthesizers and all manner of self-conscious crap to be termed 'no-wave' and 'cold-music' or 'pain-in-the-arse' noise —my personal preference. I truly hope they break out and shake things up before rock gets swallowed by this Orwellian wishful thinking jive.

Oh and by the way, I had this dream the night before. It was exactly the same scenario as that Bob Hope movie — the bayou swamp, the zombie in the coffin, everything was the same as in the movie. Except when the geezer got out of the boat it was Miles Copeland and he was offering the zombie's mother a copy of 'the Cramps' Gravest Hits'. Maybe I should see a psychiatrist. Maybe you should go to a record store.

TODAY, THEY'VE MORE IN COMMON THAN JUST JOHN, PAUL, GEORGE & RINGO.
They were all acting just like any other self-respecting Beatles' fan acted.
But that was fifteen years ago, and the thing that's closest to their hearts now was probably the furthest away from their minds then.
Today, believe it or not, they're all probably married with children and a home of their own.
It comes to us all.
And when it does, more people come to the Halifax for help with that first home than any other building society in Britain.
Last year alone, the Halifax granted nearly 150,000 mortgages.
That's a whole lot of homes.
Mind you, the Halifax is the biggest building society in the world, with over five million savers.
So it's a place where you know your money is safe and secure.
And with a number of different savings plans that all pay good interest rates, there's bound to be one just right for you.
So when you've stopped screaming and started dreaming of a place of your own, remember, start saving with the Halifax.
HALIFAX
The kind of rock everybody needs.



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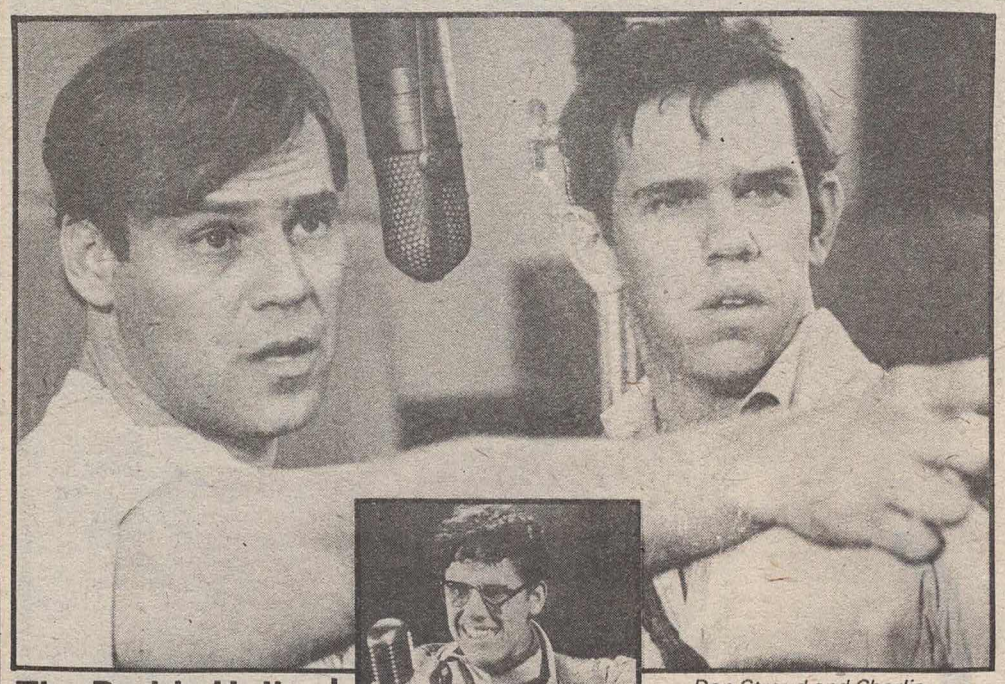

Don Stroud and Charlie Martin Smith are The Crickets, Gary Busey (inset) is Rolf Harris — er, sorry — the guv'nor.

The Buddy Holly Story

Directed by Steve Rash
Starring Gary Busey, Don Stroud and Charlie Martin Smith
(Entertainment).

Even though a debt to John Goldrosen's searching and diligent biography is acknowldged in the credits, Steve Rash's film does not after all turn out to be *the* Buddy Holly story so much as *a* Buddy Holly story.

What we have here is certainly not the literal truth, and the wisest course of action for those who are inclined to feel cheated by anything less is to avoid this.

There are moments when biographical events, necessarily perhaps, have been telescoped, but others were the facts have quite simply been gratuitously altered to suit the requirements of the film.

The most obvious invention is to send Holly and The Crickets packing to New York at the outset of their recording careers — leaving Norman Petty, who co-wrote much of Holly's material and produced it at his studio in New Mexico, out of the picture altogether.

My reaction, nevertheless, is to find such distortions largely forgiveable. After all, Holly died painfully young, only 22, and his personal life hardly had chance to become the mass of melodramatic minutiate which might have provided an appropriate narrative framework to hold together the sounds of his superb, seminal music.

In any case, the film as it stands has three considerable saving graces.

Firstly, it actually is true, in more subtle, more important ways. It contains credible characterisation, always a more important factor than strict historical accuracy; it admirably reflects the spirit of the times, and is convincing in the same way that, say, *American Graffiti* was.

There are other ways, too, in which the right emotions are conveyed. For example, the ending is, in cinematic terms, horribly abrupt; no-one needs to be reminded that this is an ideal way of capturing the shock of Holly's death in real life.

Secondly, it has no particular pretensions to being anything more than the average Hollywood biopic. Even on this level, though, it is much better than might be feared, and avoids the worst excesses of the form. It treats its subject respectfully, while avoiding outright hagiography, and though there are some dicey moments, overall the film makes a successful stand against sloppy sentimentality.

The third, and crucial, factor, is that Holly is played by Gary Busey, who gives an outstanding performance, portraying him as a gangling, lantern-jawed country boy, who is raw in some ways, but in others has an inkling of his own greatness. Busey's achievement is formidable; he even renders Holly's distinctive vocals effectively.

At moments, the film seems almost a litany of much-mourned rock heroes — as well as the Big Bopper and Richie Valens, Eddie Cochran, Sam Cooke and King Curtis are names that figure in the cast. Excessively Maudlin, perhaps, but the triumphant vitality of the music always comes through. This is an honest and eloquent tribute to a genuine pioneer of rock music.

Bob Woffinden

End game in five moves

Quintet

Directed by Robért Altman

Starring Paul Newman, Bibi Andersson and Fernando Rey
(20th Century Fox)

Robert Altman is an American who spends most of his time on film scrutinising his fellow countrymen, their cherished notions and institutions. Something of a rarity, Altman's diffident gaze — he could almost be a European looking across the Atlantic at the not always so brave, strong or true US of A — is compassionate enough, although its light, playful ironies often sharpen into satire.

But sometimes Altman appears to want to stretch his canvas, to imagine and envisage at several removes rather than to observe or re-interpret. *Quintet* is as different from *A Wedding*, his last feature, as June from January, even in our current climate. A comedy of errors and manners that was thin on content but fat on fun, *A Wedding* fell in smartly behind *M.A.S.H.* and *Nashville*.

Whereas *Quintet* has no real precedent in the Altman canon. Its wintry locations and deceptively casual pace are sometimes reminscent of *McCabe & Mrs Miller*, whilst its overall edginess calls to mind both *Images*, a disturbing study of compound schizophrenia that Altman filmed in Ireland, and the more recent *Three Women*, a typically diffuse — Altman has made something of a virtue of improvisation on set — ramble based on a dream of the director's.

Quintet isn't quite science fiction as she is usually defined, but takes place in some not too distant future when the world is gripped by another ice age: green fields are but a memory; a solitary goose flying north provokes gasps of wonderment; trains are long dead, giant saurian skins buried in snow; a decrepitating city stands gauntly among the ice floes, its environs patrolled by packs of mastiffs who chomp through the frozen corpses of its inhabitants.

As always, Altman's eye for the unorthodox is acute. Weird and wonderful structures of metal, glass and plastic clutter rooms and corridors, often jemmied together to provide makeshift amenities and appliances. Meanwhile most of the city dwellers live in dark, dingy and drab squalor, and everybody dresses as if they've just walked out of a production of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

Such a striking alliance of modern and medieval isn't of course particular to Altman, but anyone wanting to film one of Michael Moorcock's future-history romances

Paul Newman and Brigitte Fossey take the strain as ice claims the train in Robert Altman's Quintet.

would do well to look this way. The visual impact of *Quintet* lies in the fact that, although its constituent parts can be identified and relegated to precise times and places, its totality cannot. This discrepancy never loses its fascination.

Quintet's isolated, enclosed society is positively feudal, an elite with much too much time on its hands and minds presiding disinterestedly over a swarm of serfs. Everyone plays Quintet, a dice game played on a five-sided board. Everyone lives Quintet, a state of affairs that recalls the old Japanese Go masters' total absorption in their own game's intricate strategies. Quintet has patterned itself on the city's past — the place was divided into five sectors, housed five million, and so on and has imprinted itself indelibly on the psyches of those who remain there.

The film carefully unpicks the workings of a cruel, self-indulgent, loveless little upper crust. There's a lot of talk about the metaphysics of it all: meaningful, meaningless tattle as various participants in the game attempt to justify, clarify or even confuse their roles. Altman's never claimed to be a very rigorous philosopher on screen, so all the lukewarm existentialism mouthed off by his impressive cast doesn't detract. In fact it seems perfectly proper that a society as close to terminal atrophy as the one viewed in *Quintet* should speak only in cliches, endlessly recycling half-glimpsed truths and mistruths.

So what if Altman or his scriptwriters have nothing new to offer on the nature of life and death? Who has? Both have mystified man for aeons, and so they should. But Altman's depiction of his central characters' desperate entrophy is far from cliched; it's often provocatively moving.

It would be trite to propose any grandiose parallels, but the infinite worldweariness that drags so heavily on *Quintet* is hardly exclusive to it. Think of our wunnerful world and think of how all political and philosophical systems erode or mutate into stasis, betray themselves or are betrayed, have to be replenished or replaced.

How depressing? No, how invigorating. *Quintet* is fair warning. Time for a change.

Angus MacKinnon.

The Muppet Movie

Directed by James Frawley
Guest starring Mel Brooks, James Coburn, Dom DeLuise, Elliot Gould, Bob Hope and Telly Savalas
(ITC)

What *is* this Muppet magic?

Observe the fail-safe TV format. Rest assured that each one of your foam-brained friends will lambast the week's celebrity in their own inimitable fashion. Thrill to that clipped, breezy style that machine-guns the punchlines at you with a deceptive intensity. Believe that these stuffed starlets are beyond all human error. They are the flawless *Laugh-In* hosts — Rowan and Martin; no strings attached.

Imagine our heroes torn from such security and sprawled out across Life's epic All-American highway. Picture them pitted against the 'realities' of passion, disillusion and deceit, while every one of their cleverly evolved gags is stretched beyond breaking point and then ruthlessly peddled to death.

Brace youself for the truth — as inevitable as the venture itself — that *The Muppet Movie* is no landmark in classic cinema. For its director, James Frawley, faced with the problem of sustaining such fragile resources, dilution is the sole solution.

About all he retains of the TV formula is its self-deriding humour. The movie's constructed as a private screening in a preview theatre, watched by the critical eye of its own cast. "They're afraid to show it in public," offer the shrewdly sceptical Waldorf and Statler, "I've seen detergents leave a better film than this."

Even the occasional sharp one-liner, and the phalanx of famous faces, lose all impact without the usually compressed Muppet pacing, and once all our padded performers have turned in their statutary acts, a gruesome sentimentality creeps in to bolster the last rapidly sagging reels.

The film nosedives into every standard pitfall, the worst of which is the catapulting of Kermit from his unobtrusive, inane self into an Oscar attempt to realise his blanket Disney ambition — "to make millions of people happy."

Thus the gormless green one quits his swamp stomping-grounds, lured by a celluloid talent scout (Dom DeLuise), and hi-tails it to Hollywood, recruiting the massed ranks of Muppets en route.

And when Kermit isn't burdened with self-doubt, he roots for Mateus Rose-tinted romance with Miss Piggy to the tune of yet another godawful slushy ballad.

Really, a more indulgent, insensitive attempt would be a very tall order.

Mark Ellen

Otto Preminger and Marty Feldman — just two of the guest stars in The Muppet Movie.

Rudy Durand's

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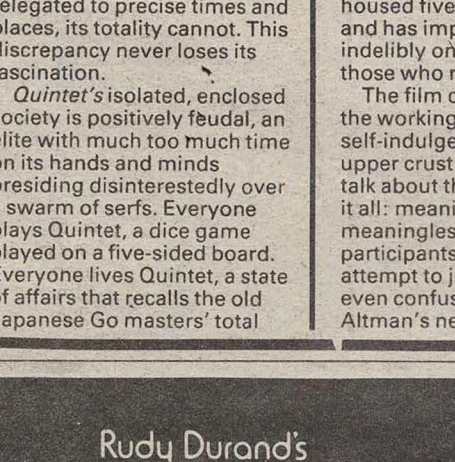

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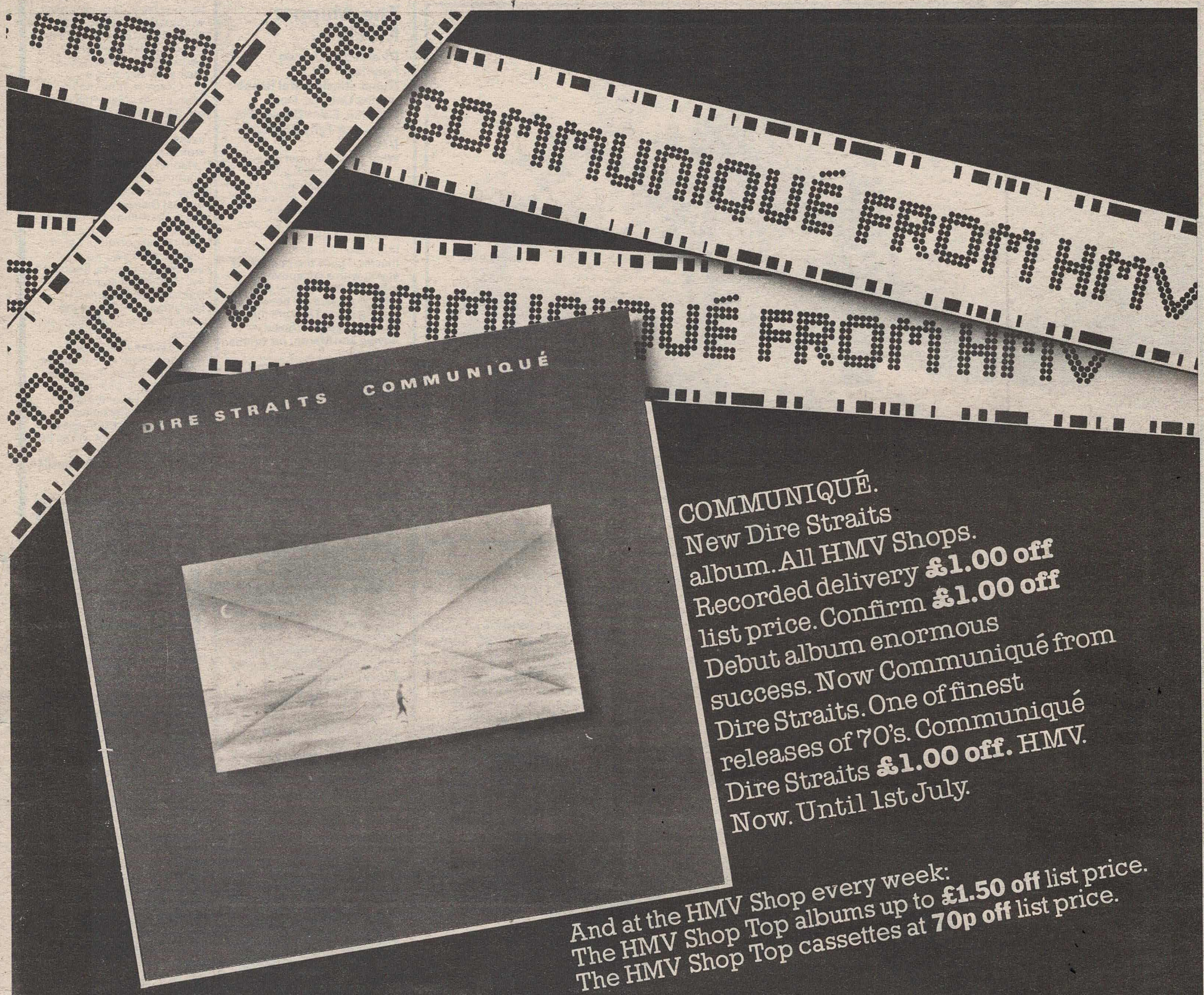

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ALBUMS

JONI MITCHELL
Mingus (Asylum)
It seems unfair and ungrateful to carp at a project that has obviously placed great demands on the integrity and dedication of those it has involved, but Joni Mitchell's 'Mingus' is not, I'm afraid a very conspicuous musical success.

Quite what a white Canadian singer-songwriter whose work has successively touched upon folk, soft rock and, peripherally, even softer jazz and a black American bassist and composer whose work embraced jazz, hard gospel and even harder blues, expected or wanted to extract from this encounter must remain conjecture. Joni Mitchell is not in the habit of giving interviews and Charles Mingus died in Mexico at the age of 56 on January 5th 1979.

The only readily available point of reference is Mitchell's own, engagingly open liner note: "The first time I saw his face it shone up at me with a joyous mischief. I liked him immediately. I had come to New York to hear six new songs he had written for me. I was honoured! I was curious!" . . . "Time never ticked so loudly for me as it did this last year. I wanted Charlie to witness the project's completion" . . . "This was a difficult but challenging project. I was trying to please Charlie and still be true to myself. I cut each song three or four times. I was after something personal — something mutual —something indescribable . . . "These (final) versions satisfy me. They are audio paintings" . . . and so on.

Things cannot have been made easier by Mitchell's apparently mercurial temperament, or by Mingus' character — he was by all accounts, including his own, a wilful, demanding, unpredicatble man, the tough and tender in him constantly on edge — nor by his rapidly declining state of health — he was confined to a wheelchair for the last years of his life, a bitter irony for a bassman.

Whatever, far from emerging as an increasingly coherent comprehensible piece of work, 'Mingus' threatens to become oddly, disorientatingly indecipherable. Mitchell's assurances and expressions of satisfaction with the album seem forlorn, a thin gauze of self-justification stretched over a determined perfectionism.

In the meantime, I sincerely hope that Joni Mitchell no longer cherishes any ambitions or pretensions — perhaps I'm doing her an injustice, perhaps she never did — to become a jazz singer because, to be frank, she just ain't got what it takes. That's not her fault, but her fate. Some of her attempts at jazz diction and inflection on 'Mingus' are as misplaced as the white, would-be country singerette at the end of Altman's *Nashville* fronting a black gospel choir. They don't convince or connect; technically accomplished, emotive and committed in their way, they remain disturbingly divorced from their surroundings.

At the same time it's not hard to appreciate that 'Mingus' was a logical, although fraught with pitfalls, musical step for Mitchell. Ever since she raised herself out of the winsome seagull girl persona and settings of her early albums, Mitchell has repeatedly proved that she insists on improving and developing her musical and lyrical vocabulary.

'For The Roses' made the break; 'Court And Spark' consolidated it; 'Miles Of Aisles' rewrote the past and prepared for the future; 'The Hissing of Summer Lawns' opened exotic new avenues of expression; 'Hejira' marked time and 'Don Juan's Reckless Daughter' signalled further experimentation: Joni Mitchell certainly *tries* and, for that reason alone, must be credited with having flown the dreary roost clucked over and pecked across by such vapid singing-songwriting apologists as James Taylor, Carly Simon, Stephen Stills, Phoebe Snow and Janis Ian.

Joni's Visions Of Mingus: Lost In The Haze

Joni Mitchell gives it a twirl

As for the musical direction Mitchell has taken, it's found one of several reasonably secure bases in her individual use of what's loosely, often derogatively referred to as 'fusion' music. She first employed musicians from the L.A. Express/Crusaders axis to stretch her scope, to give herself more rarefied air to breathe, then enrolled members of Weather Report. Report's Jaco Pastorius first appeared on 'Hejira', then again on 'Don Juan' now accompanied by saxophonist Wayne Shorter and percussionists Maleno Badrena and Alejandro Acuna; the same album also used the services of jazz arranger composer Michael Gibbs, notably on the expansive but sometimes faltering 'Paprika Plains'.

Mitchell has also attempted more traditionally jazz-orientated material with Wardell & Gray's 'Twisted', a number made famous by Annie Ross, on 'Court And Spark' and Eddie & Hendricks' 'Centrepiece' on 'Summer Lawns'. Both interpretations worked well enough within their precisely defined limits; they might have seemed wry, eccentric wrinkles on the glistening surface of Mitchell's newer music, but they certainly didn't offend.

Nor, mind you, does Mitchell's singing or writing on 'Mingus'; both just seem sadly unfulfilled, as if Mitchell would have dearly loved to have requited her admiration for Mingus, but tried *too* hard, lost herself somewhere along the narrow, precipitous way. I could give you specific examples of this, but that seems pointless — you'll find them as and when you will.

AND the music? Ah yes, the music; it's a long, long dream away from almost anything Mitchell has previously conceived — and, sometimes, a dark one. It is naturally impossible to know whether the six pieces Mingus gave Mitchell, only four of which are present here, were intended as basic working models or as complete and immutable artefacts. The impression I get from them is that they were sketches, impressionistic hints, splashes and slashes that might, in another's hand, have been more fully and more completely developed.

'A Chair In The Sky', 'Sweet Sucker Dance' and 'The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines' appear un or at least under-formed — either that or Mingus was aiming at a very subtle, acquiescent, pastel mode of expression. To wit — themes and moods are hinted at, rarely emphasised; melodies are in evidence, but so understated as to be virtually hoe-down, well towards invisibility. This is not pop music.

Which isn't to say that Mingus' music isn't rivetting — it is, but this particular setting doesn't maximise or enhance it. You have to grope very (almost too) hard for its gist, to fight for the intricate symmetry and internal organisation you know it must possess. 'Mingus' is so low-level in parts it could be whiffed away.

Perhaps Mitchell was just over-awed at the prospect of changing Mingus' blue-prints. Perhaps she didn't want to. Her liner note admission that she had to pass over earlier sessions featuring the likes of guitarist John McLaughlin, drummer Tony Williams, bassists Stanley Clarke and Eddie Gomez, saxophonists Gerry Mulligan and Phil Woods and longtime Mingus drummer Danny Richmond in the role of narrator certainly indicates that she was troubed and confused by the standards of artistry this project required of her.

Mingus painted by Joni

In theory though, there was no earthly reason why a Mingus and Mitchell collaboration should not have resulted in a much more definite, definitive achievement. Mingus' music has often been poignantly imagistic and poetic, Mitchell's just as wide-reaching in its own way. Personally, and like T. S. Eliot immensely, I would have loved to have heard their once mooted interpretation of the poet's *Four Quartets*. I even suspect that both partners, Mitchell especially, might have realised themselves more fully by applying themselves to another artist's work for their initial inspiration. The exchange of views would then have been more comfortably indirect, based on a third party, and therefore possibly more successful.

'Mingus' is interspersed with tape extracts of Mingus talking, singing, thinking out loud and so on. Mitchell thinks they add "a pertinent resonance"; I agree, and I'd offer much the same opinion about her three paintings of Mingus that adorn the album sleeve — she's no longer the naive artist she once was.

Mitchell's own words and music, 'God Must Be A Boogie Man' is easily the most successful piece on the album. The lyrics are based on Mingus' three-sided assessment of his character in his diffuse, tempestuous *Beneath The Underdog* autobiography. The chorus line is sheer sanctified soul and the entire song seems to indicate that, in this instance at least, Mitchell could respond much more incisively and perceptively to Mingus the man than to Mingus the musician.

At the other end of the album, there's Mingus' perennial 'Goodbye Pork Pie Hat'. It's given words by Mitchell that are, at best, forgiveably concerned and, at worst, unforgiveably trite. Mitchell has mined this sort of lode — seeing herself as a sympathetic commentator on black musicians and their often unequal battles against predudice and predicament — before, in 'Fury Sings The Blues' on 'Hejira', but it's not a suit of clothes she wears well. It's not that she's patronising, just helplessly distanced. Mingus wrote 'Pork Pie Hat' for the great saxophonist Lester Young, but Mitchell's wistful elegiacs to both Young and Mingus can't, however well-intentioned, compete with the overwhelming echo of the music beneath them.

And in between these two bookends? Well, there's 'A Chair In The Sky', another attempt, I think, by Mitchell to become Mingus' lyrical biographer, but not a convincing one. Birdland, the New York jazz joint recently serenaded by Weather Report on 'Heavy Weather', is namechecked for authenticity, but the characterisation doesn't solidify, seems tentative, enfeebled somehow, unctiously sentimental.

'The Wolf That Lives In Lindsey' has music by Mitchell *(apres* Mingus, it seems) and strikes a more general narrative chord. A tale of a hard Hollywood hustler, it might refer to Mingus by proxy, it might not. Whatever, the device of using a recording of wolves howling desultorily is artifice, Joni, not art; it fails miserably, evoking ridicule rather than respect. It also shatters the song's otherworldly eeriness.

"Sweet Sucker Dance' and 'The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines' deal with archetypal but non-specific figures: hipsters living fast, winning, loving, losing. Both lyrics are rather self-conscious; they try to envisage a world of which Mitchell's experience must be, to say the least, limited. Along with 'Chair' and 'Wolf', they turn nice, neat phrases and create lively images across a broad emotional spectrum — but disappointingly little more. These aren't so much songs of experience as songs of escapism and, at times, misguided, overblown romanticism. Mitchell's own poetic sensibility is irrefutable, but here she's let an active, listless imagination get several better of her, and done herself down. There's *so* much love lost on 'Mingus' ...

The musicians involved are Mitchell (guitars and vocals), Jaco Pastorius (bass), Wayne Shorter (soprano sax), Herbie Hancock (electric piano), Peter Erskine (drums), Don Alias (congas) and Emil Richards (percussion). Their attempts to get to grips with the material are as admirable as they're ultimately subverted.

When he has a mind to, Pastorius can eschew excess for the most exacting displays of emoting, and duly does so here. Shorter's modesty and economy, a sometimes lamented feature of his playing in recent years, is supremely apposite throughout; he demonstrates unfathomably intuitive understanding, cutting to the core again and again. Hancock's contributions are similarly dedicated, reminiscent of the enviable stringency and poise of his playing in the '60s with his own septet. Erskine reveals himself to be far more adaptible than his last year's Weather Report indicated.

All of which is all the more the cause for regret that 'Mingus' just doesn't make its ends meet. As a reverential tribute to Mingus, one of the most influential post-war jazzmen, from all those who participated, its failings seem secondary, excusable. As the new Joni Mitchell album, they seem primary, unavoidable.

The album is, however, a fascinating one. I know I'll refer to it again and again, seeking answers and insights that currently escape me. Joni Mitchell had, I suppose, laid herself open to severe criticism by undertaking to complete 'Mingus' at all; her courage — I'm absolutely sure her aim was good and honourable — deserves much more than mere dismissal.

There *should* be no barriers to the sort of cross-cultural co-operation that has been so ernestly and honestly sought here, but there are. Joni Mitchell has reached very high, only to find ironic clouds, vague and tantalising shapes and reflections. She must be disappointed ...

Myself, I shall place and play 'Mingus' alongside my other Mitchell and Mingus albums. The flesh of 'Mingus' may have proved weak, but its spirit is strong. And that is really all that matters.

Angus MacKinnon

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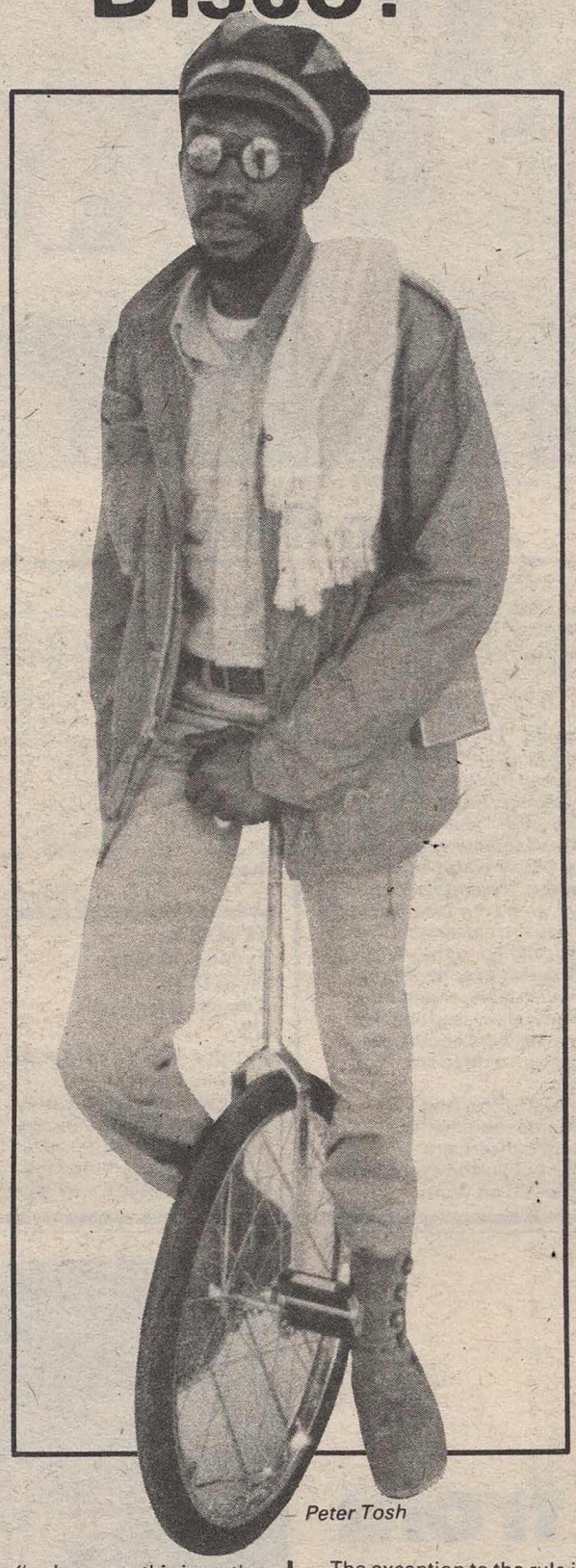
Cultural Disco?



Peter Tosh

PETER TOSH:
Mystic Man *(Rolling Stones)*

So, it has come to this. A Peter Tosh disco record. A track called "Buck-inn-ham Palace' wherein Sly Dunbar, Robbie Shakespeare and the gang deliver a rhythm and production worthy of Futter and Rodgers, and Tosh declames on the virtues of 'erb and the pressing need for its immediate introduction to the residence and seat of our royal family — *"Light your spliff, light your chalice/Come mek we forward to Buck-inn-ham Palace"* (shades of U Roy's 'Chalice In The Palace').

It's a slick highly commercial piece of international Jamaican music and you can dance your ass off to it in any suburban English disco or Nippon niterie or New York club; it could easily be that succesful. Plus it will probably be banned by the BBC for good measure.

And why shouldn't Tosh make a disco record? Everyone else is *(and* succeeding) and like he says, who are any of us bright souls to pull purist rank on one of the great originators of reggae music? And not that one has anything against disco anyway (well, not too much) but Tosh's almost apologetic preface to the song, *"Dis ya music roots music as far as I can see/Dis ya music Rasta music as far as I can see"* is a half truth. Roots music like Bee Gees is roots music maybe — universal music for Everyman, or at least every dancing man — but not roots music as for the reggae audience understands the term. Not awesome, majestic, emotional music. Not the stuff that Keef collects so avidly.

Is there such a thing as Cultural Disco? Offerings from Ian Dury and Bob Marley prove it's possible (with Big Youth somewhere there in the background), while others at least sing Disco with soul or style or, like PiL, invade it with anarchic glee. Compared to these various achievements, this Tosh t'ing is merely functional, a flagrant stab at the commercial jugular which Tosh has been aiming for ever since the break-up of the original Wailers tritality back in '73.

His quest for stardom and recognition comparable to Marley's — who as King Dread is now uncatchable — has been fitful but cumulative. Everyone now knows that Peter Tosh is a righteous minister of 'Erb, militant upholder of equal rights and justice, a karate kicking stepping razor, a bush doctor, a mean rapper, a bringer of thunder and lightning (a serious thing), the toughest.

Of course, the link-up with the Stones has helped, and oh, it was a nice touch, this international brotherhood of rebel musicians, badass rockers meets reggae rude bwoy. The music, though, remained stubbornly tepid; there was the disastrous and confused 'Bush Doctor' set, a limp recut of Tosh's 'Toughest' classic, that embarrasing duet with Jagger as they mashed up an old Tempt's number in an attempt (almost successful) to crack the charts.

So now we have Tosh as 'Mystic Man', monocycling into our lives on an Annie Leibowitz cover with what is probably his most commercial collection to date, certainly an improvement on 'Bush Doctor', better than the sluggish 'Legalise It' debut set though still not as convincing as the 'Equal Rights' album. (His best work, on singles like 'Babylon Queendom' and 'Vampire' meanwhile remains unreleased here).

The title track only highlights Tosh's shortcomings. We have the familiar Tosh litany: *"I man don't drink no champagne/I man don't sniff no cocaine/I man don't take no morphine* . . ."— hang on, this is on the Rolling Stones label isn't it? — before Tosh explains he's *"such a mystic man"*. Whilst not questioning Tosh's mystic powers, these are hardly reflected in the music; instead it's a predictably cumbersone Tosh riff, dressed up with fancy production but ultimately un-moving. For the kind of feeling the track demands you have to look to the likes of say, Marley's 'Natural Mystic', Burning Spear music, or the recent outings of Bunny Wailer (who has thankfully given up with *his* attempts at disco — musical horses of Troy, with lyrics like *"Get up you black Yankee/Don't be no follow fashion monkey"* — to concentrate on producing some of the best music currently issuing from JA. All unreleased here of course).

The remaining seven songs are all of a muchness. Catchy unbarbed rhythms — Sly and Robbie on cruise — and catchy half-familiar melodies with Tosh reciting righteousness in a curiously amiable manner and I Three type call and response female chorus helping out. Subversive pop? Almost, but Tosh's inability to move beyond the literal to the symbolic, to pen lyrics with real poetic resonance, his weakness for the over-obvious phrase ("In a de shitty" for "In The City") and finally his one dimensional vocal delivery leave his songs finally earthbound.

The exception to the rule is 'Jah Seh No', whose musical simplicity allows Tosh to deliver a devotional lyric with the kind of heartfelt plaintiveness that got lost back in '73. The rest is, frankly, disposable, though doubtless the set will delight enough people to make it a commercial success.

Me, I'm just put in mind of the Solomon Burke song that Jagger used to sing: "Sometimes you get what you want, then you go and lose what you have."

Neil Spencer

CAN
Can *(Laser)*

Can, that most interesting and exploratory of German bands, are happier with 'Can' than they have been with an album for some time. And understandably — most of 'Can' is well on line and pushing to shove again.

For a variety of reasons, some personal, some professional, the last few years have not been steady sailing for Can. 'Out Of Reach', the title of their last album, seemed an apt comment on their predicament; the band were out of focus as well, dithering about in some private, vacuum-sealed middle distance, recording without much relish, not touring at all.

But 'Can' regains the grip. Most of it has a coherence of mood, a certainty, a mystery even, that has been lacking since 'Soon Over Babaluma', itself an emphatic reference point on the Can compass for what goes up, down and across here.

The shuffling 'All Gates Open' begins again, instantly dismissing the sometimes spectacular failures (but failures all the same) that clouded issues on 'Landed', 'Flow Motion' and 'Saw Delight', forcibly insisting and demonstrating that Can still can. Its initially fragile, tentative melody soon firms up, airbrushed by Michael Karoli's harmonica and Irmin Schmidt's electronic pastels, gains sudden, surging momentum from Rosko Gee's heartbeat bassline. Karoli's guitars and Schmidt's keyboards begin to test the available space in tandem, measuring perspectives with incomparabe grace; Karoli's closing improvisation is breathlessly crystalline.

'Safe' follows, Karoli singing again, a mix-down at Hansa, Berlin lending Can the depth and definition so essential to them on record. It's a rolling tottering piece that's gradually enveloped by a funnel of grey noise. Karoli's guitars veer from the improbably succinct to the violently abstract, tugging and distorting the vortex like a power magnet. A strange one, this, and so utterly Cannish: absolutely elsewhere.

Side two's 'Sodom' presents Karoli and Schmidt in multiple image over Jackie Liebezeit's punctillious drum figure. A lugubrious, threatening squabble of tongues, it provides an interesting companion piece to 'Unlimited Edition's' 'Gomorrah'. The ensuing 'A Spectable' lurches fast and frantic, as literally offbeat as you'll hear it, Karoli cutting chord shapes that verge on 4D.

Which leaves 'Sunday Jam', Karoli again the mainman, the purity of his playing almost metaphysical, Schmidt content to dapple the Latin lilt. Then, tucked away at close of play, you'll find 'Can Can,' a jokey Offenbach rip-off, and 'Can Be', vague variations on the same theme. Already available as a single pairing, neither foible should have appeared here; they can't carry the load and effectively disrupt, if not destroy, so much of the mood-mutating that has come before. A bad error of judgement, especially as another 'Gates' or 'Safe' would have clinched it.

This aside, 'Can' offers much more meat on the bone or, as us vegetarians have it, corn on the cob than I'd expected from Can at this late stage of their career. So yes, I still want more.

Angus MacKinnon

ALAN HULL
Phantoms *(Rocket Records)*

Those who remember the disconcerting cover of his '73 album 'Pipedream' will be aware of Alan Hull's affinity for Magritte paintings. Another one appears on the front of 'Phantoms'. This time it's a man whose silhouette is a landscape cutting through the dark acove a brick wall, and it conveniently conjures up more images of delusion, dimension, distraction etcetera.

Hull's lyrics attempt the same, but haven't the authenticity to carry it off. This collection of songs finds him suspiciously dazed, confused, world-weary and wallowing in the realisation that the place is full of disillusioned loonies, and that he's evidently one of them.

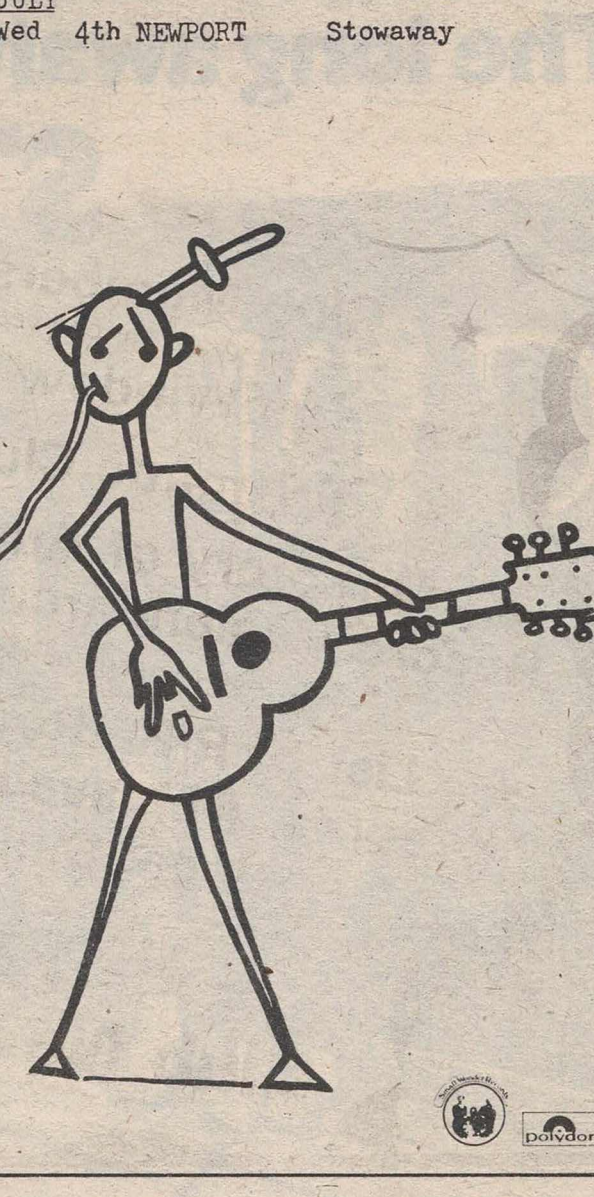
The album only strengthens my opinion that he can write annoyingly insistent melodies, has an efficent command of styles (calypso shuffle, shimmering acoustic and Tyneside country rock on this outing), but when it comes to 'concept' he'd be better off with the old eulogies to a bottle of stout than these slim subscriptions to Melancholics Anonymous.

Mark Ellen

PATRIK FITZGERALD

NEW ALBUM

Grubby Stories.



ON TOUR

JUNE

Thu	21st	LIVERPOOL	Erics
Fri	22nd	NOTTINGHAM	Sandpiper
Sat	23rd	DERBY	Ajanta Cinema
Sun	24th	OXFORD	College of Further Education
Thu	28th	BIRMINGHAM	Festival Suite
Fri	29th	MANCHESTER	Factory
Sat	30th	BRIDGEND	Drones

JULY

Wed	4th	NEWPORT	Stowaway

polydor

IMPORTS

When it comes to musically floating like a butterfly and stinging like a bee, **Smokey Robinson's** been undisputed champ for years. And to my admittedly biased ears, 'Where There's Smoke' (Tamla), which is by way of being his latest defence of his title, is easily good enough to see off any would-be contenders for the remainder of '79.

If you twist my arm, I'll confess that the album's hardly innovative in any way. 'Share It', one of the septet of tracks Smokey has on offer, is built on one of those infuriatingly simple riffs that has Motown circa '66 inscribed all over it; 'Cruisin'', which finds the Miracle-maker in best honeydrippin' form, sounds as if it might have skipped hand-in-hand down the lane with 'Groovin'' back in '67.

And even when Smokey delves into disco, as he does on a couple of occasions, it's still reach back rather than reach out, with Robinson devoting part of his efforts to a re-vamp of 'Get Ready'. Perhaps the nearest thing to a suprise item is when Stevie Wonder pops out of his greenhouse to add vocal and other assistance on 'I Love The Nearness Of You', a warm and jazzy little ballad that he and Smokey concocted between them.

Not that the lack of exploration matters a jot when one's thinking in terms of William Robinson. All that is required is for Smokey to drape that wonderfully emotive, sinuous voice around any reasonably formed song shape and such things as time and fashion don't really count for much. But then, I guess I'm not telling you anything that you didn't know already.

Something which you might not be so instantly aware of, is 'Les Petit Calins' (French Polydor), a movie soundtrack album which contains 55 minutes of music by **Bryan Ferry, Roxy Music, Golden Earring** and **Martin Dune**. As far as I can tell, all the Ferry items are readily available studio cuts, while the live version of Roxy's 'If There Is Something' would appear to be the same as that which graces the 'Viva' album, even though there is some discrepancy in the listed playing times. On the face of things then, 'Les Petit Calins' is not as interesting as it might seem. But still the Roxy doxy who must have everything might care to indulge — which is why I've provided the info.

With a real revival on the cards for **Creedence Clearwater,** thanks to a TV album courtesy of EMI, importers now shipping in American Fantasy's trio of CCR double albums could find their investment paying off. A well-packaged series, the albums comprise '1968-69' (the band's first Fantasy elpee and 'Bayou Country' side by side), '1969' ('Willie And The Poor Boys' and 'Green River') and '1970' ('Cosmo's Factory' and 'Pendulum').

And while we're on the subject of reissues, **Z Z Top** freaks may care to learn that their boys have not only now signed to WEA but have also carted their London wares with them — which means that 'First Album', 'Tres Hombre', 'Tejas Mud' and the band's 'Best Of' albums are being imported on Warner's own wonderful label. Oddly, 'Fandango' hasn't yet surfaced at my local shopping precinct in Warner form — though I guess it's all a matter of time.

Fred Dellar

DION AND THE BELMONTS
20 Original Hit Recordings ***(Ensign)***

Let's have a little respect around these parts when the name Dion is mentioned.

The reason being: in the three bleak years from around the time Eddie Cochran checked out, right up until a combination of smack and Beatlemania (temporarily) shafted his illustrious career, Dion DiMucci was about the only white America rock 'n' roller worth serious consideration. Let's put it another way: if Robert De Niro had turned out a singer instead of an actor, no doubt he would have displaysd the same kind of unique attributes associated with DiMucci.

The kid may have built up his initial following in the late '50s — by fronting the Bronx-based Belmonts on such classy cuts as 'I Wonder Why', 'A Teenager In Love' and 'Where Or When' — but it was only when, in 1960, he struck out as a soloist that Dion fully developed his inimitable style with an unbroken succession of (often self-penned) feisty finger-poppers.

It was straight four-to-the-bar workouts like 'Runaround Sue', 'Come Go With Me', 'The Wanderer', '(I Was) Born To Cry', 'Lovers Who Wander', 'Little Diane', The Majestic' and 'Ruby Baby' that promptly elevated Dion as the coolest of cats. In an era almost entirely dominated by Philly wimps, the wop doo-woppin' Dion was the only artist that, given the choice, one would choose to identify with.

Driven by a cocksure drummer, he swung through each song with a positive vengeance — Moaning, slurring, scatting, bumping and bending notes and whole phrases in much the same easy manner as the Harlem Globe Trotters run rings around their opponents.

Dion pulls birds with Anita Harris circa '61.

Dion Revival

'The Wanderer' may have been Dion's chauvinistic manifesto, but he wasn't entirely immune to *affaires-de-coeur.* His self-penned lyric to '(I Was) Born To Cry' may have revealed *"Every girl I ever loved/She stepped right on my feet/I thought I had a friend once/But he kicked me in the teeth,"* but 'Little Diane' affirmed that he wasn't about to be pussy-whipped by nobody: *"I wanna pack and leave, slap your face/Bad girls like you are a disgrace."* Even when pushed to the verge of the biggest-ever heartbreak he never degenerated into self-pity. He was probably the only artist who could both dance and sing to stop from crying.

In 1972, Dion And The Belmonts reunited for a one-off concert, an under-publicised event (preserved on Warner Brothers) which was a much more important reunion than similar summit meetings by CSN&Y or The Byrds. But let's face facts, Dion (with or without The Belmonts) was a more accurate reflection of American adolescence than most other groups that followed in his wake.

Apparently, this is Lou Reed's all-time favourite album — at lease he's still got one saving grace!

Roy Carr

TYCOON
Tycoon ***(Arista)***
AVIATOR
Aviator ***(Harvest)***
UK
Danger Money ***(Polydor)***

Ever since Boston and Foreigner scored with their versions of cocktail lounge heavy metal, innumerable bands have attempted the same ploy. Take a well-tried formula that's already a proven money-spinner with the kids, and then mellow it down and gloss it up and sell it to the kids' blander big brothers.

You can always tell this kind of band. They have clipped simple names that won't give offence to their prospective market. Tycoon hedge their bets very thoroughly. Half the band sport cropped modern haircuts. Half go in for Beatle mop-tops. No matter which way the U.S. market jumps, they'll be ready.

Naturally, their music is equally professional and thoughfully contrived. Robert John Lange has been brought in as producer, and the band have given him some neat little songs to work upon. 'Such A Woman', 'Slow Down Boy', 'The Way It Goes' are all bland offerings with the riffs carefully toned down to avoid embarrassment in the better class of household.

The one time Tycoon come good is when they junk the formula. On a song called 'Don't You Cry No More', Mr Lange appears to have coaxed some gorgeous acapella harmony out of them. A moment to savour in an otherwise drab 40 minutes.

While Tycoon are a bunch of unknown Americans like Boston, Aviator are a group of old hands off the British rock circuit. Something more on the lines of Foreigner. Readers who are particularly long in the tooth will recall that Jack Lancaster was a member of Blodwyn Pig, Clive Bunker used to be in Jethro Tull and Mick Rogers was with Manfred Mann's Earth Band.

Sadly, these old dogs are evidently finding the new tricks tough to master. Lancaster plays saxophones in much the same way as he did with Blodwyn Pig. Bunker sounds as though he's still accompanying Ian Anderson's daft dances, and Rogers might still be with Manfred, but isn't. It's all skilful stuff in its way. In 1967, it would have been an

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innovation.

UK, meanwhile are evidently out to be the new Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, although why they should want to be is anyone's guess. More veterans here. Eddie Jobson of Roxy Mark II and John Wetton of whatever. Joined by a butch drummer called Terry Bozzio, who used to play with Zappa and sounds like one.

In their favour, they do at least attempt songs instead of ponderous clever-dick instrumentals, but after a couple of plays I can't remember a single one of them.

At least Boston and Foreigner know how to write hit singles.

Bob Edmands

JAMES WHITE AND THE BLACKS
Off White *(ZE)*

James Chance, alias James White, leader of The Contortions aka The Blacks, has been making something of a name for himself this past year or so, trying to carve his initials on any handy surface.

He's cast himself as a new age psycho always spoiling for a fight, any fight you choose. In New York — or really the small part of it that ceaselessly feeds its own petty obsessions of a 'scene' that is 'happening' — Chance cuts quite a figure. He's the *enfant terrible* of a clique of shock troops, dillentantes and leeches that grew out of the camp followers of the original New York bands — a position similar in many respects to that of The Banshees over here.

He looks perpetually moody and sullen, no less so than on the cover here, where he comes on like a zoot-suited Mickey's Monkey, and his nerve ends crackle like live wires. Name a taboo and he'd be happy to break it. How glamourous! How dull. Outside of New York people would probably just throw things at him.

Inside New York, he's happy to make openly fascist statements so long as it suits his purposes of antagonism. In fact, he'll do anything, it seems, to make people feel uncomfortable, musically and culturally. And this is the nearest America is likely to get to the kind of provocation practised two years ago by the Pistols. But it's all so vicarious . . . a cheap thrill for blase sensibilities. Chance will only ever upset a small nest of media vultures who represent a mostly insignificant target. He might as well be pissing in the wind.

But in his particular world it will nonetheless serve him well. This is the stuff of which legends are made, don't you know? And this is James White and The Blacks, disco record — take it or leave it.

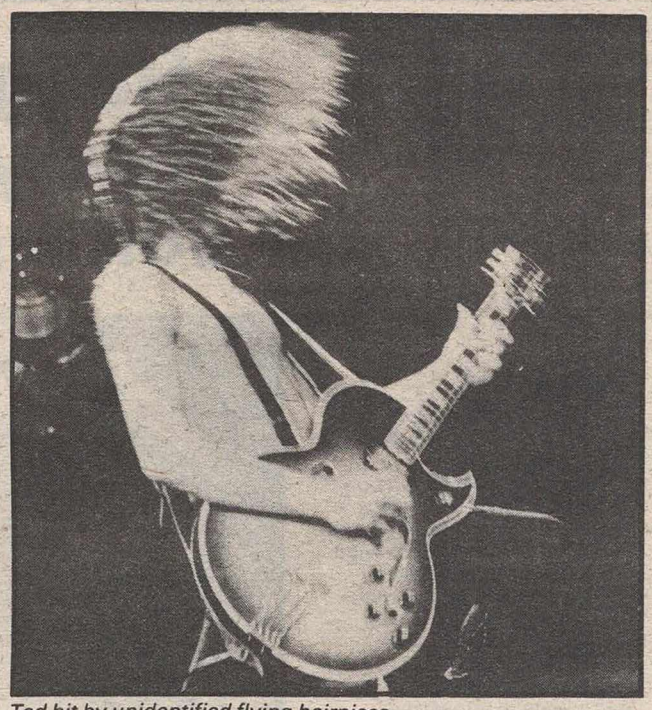
The Contortions — who were the only worthwhile thing about Eno's 'No New York' compilation of self-styled new musicians and will be remembered, if for nothing else, for their frazzled, neurotic version of James Brown's 'I Can't Stand Myself' — take time out to fool around with a sort of punk/jazz/disco fusion. Various guests include Bob Quine of the Voidoids, Kirstian Hoffman from The Mumps and Lydia Lunch from Teenage Jesus, who cameos on 'Stained Sheets' playing a part Jane Birkin once made famous. She gurgles and squeals with the telephone between her legs while Chance talks dirty. But Lydia and James sound like utter hams, and what might otherwise be deplorably misogynist becomes merely stupid and sleazy. It won't shock anyone who is likely to hear it.

Aside from the first few minutes of the 'Contort Yourself' single, the music is messy, indulgent and much too frivolous to take remotely seriously: one side of one-joke disco talk-overs and one side of ersatz avant-garde instrumentals. I couldn't take Chance seriously if I tried and it usually takes something a bit less facile to make me laugh. He wails away on his saxophone like all the free jazz greats he may or may not have heard but has certainly misunderstood. Chance's jazz credibility seems to stem mostly from a well-thumbed copy of Ross Russell's *Bird Lives!*. He wants to cut hot shots in back alleys, live fast, and shoot lots of jism.

Lou Reed ought to be charging people money when they borrow his charisma, and that's exactly what Chance is doing (with a bit of Richard Hell's solipsism thrown in), both in specific terms with this album and in general terms with his desire to be thoroughly obnoxious and depraved.

If you must, then save your pennies for the forthcoming Contortions album. Or buy this and boost James' fat ego. Fat chance.

Paul Rambali



Ted hit by unidentified flying hairpiece.

Ted On Arrival

TED NUGENT
State Of Shock *(Epic)*

Ted Nugent's latest disc starts with him emitting a ghastly, constipated greeumph! It's a gesture of intent that is in perfect accord with my favourite image of the Motor City Madman — him squatting on the bowl.

The Nuge has taken to baring bowel and soul with pathetic candour, the human faeces of heavy metal, when he is really both victim and perpetrator of life's circumstance.

For several years Ted delighted in regaling listeners with tales of extramarital pussy knockin' on his door. Most of it was the kind of mouth that don't mean doodley squat but underneath the braggart's cloak a deeply unhappy Nugent lurked.

Spurned by an aggrieved wife, robbed of his children's company, Nugent chooses to pursue a living he no longer needs. If the phenomenon of the man continues to attract interest then it's no longer on grounds of bad taste because listening to the plastic is not a question of vicarious, dubious pleasure, but a mindless chore.

Myself, I like Ted for his circus act and preferred to laugh with him, not at him, for his public's staying power (me included). Ted Nugent's business is giving that public what it wants, and whatever merit he once possessed evaporated when he and band became total bread heads. And this new band is worse than past outfits, what with singer Charlie Huhn trying to sound like Robin Zander plus muscles, and failing dismally.

Lowering the needle at random — even on a remake of George Harrison's marginally pleasant 'I Want To Tell You' — proves that he hasn't changed his act since 'Call Of The Wild' reared its noisy progeny. That old 'ringing in my ears' is with us again, the ingredients and formula are painless, profitable and boring.

Nugent must know that success washed him out, his tricks are so transparent. Still, Ted is no fool, he always uses the shortest cuts, the flashest guitar filigree, the least demanding set of phrases. Perhaps the title track or the yucky 'Alone' could have provided hints to his real mental state tho' he can't afford to let the fans think too long on that (that is, if the American contingent can think at all). Instead it's back to the daily grind, the willingly subjugated groupies, every woman jack of 'em 'Saddle Sore', 'Paralyzed' and 'Satisfied'.

This *isn't* a rock and roll record — for all his sharp shooting accuracy Ted can't land that beast any more. The nearest he comes to it he has to rip off some Lynyrd Skynyrd pacemaker boogie *a la* 'Free Bird' (On 'Saddle Sore') and then his gun doesn't go off. Rock and roll escapes Ted Nugent every time.

Of course, no one is forcing anyone to buy this junk and when they do Ted is honest enough to justify his scam on a song called 'Take It Or Leave It'. Given the option, Theodore, I know what I'll do.

Max Bell

METRO
New Love *(EMI)*

Rock and roll like Metro's is made by putting together all the music's superficially correct properties.

Rock and roll, as in Metro, is just an appropriate marketing place. The prevalent taste in pout, suit, stance and backdrop is processed and presented to a public with money to spend and windows to look in.

It's easy to fall for, as we've *all* found out sometime or other. The graphic relationship with what we want in r'n'r or pop — youth, flash, sex, direction, push — is founded on illusion, funded by marketing experience. It's really redundant.

Metro, male, five pieces, appropriate instruments, and modern *(sic)* street *(sic-sic)* imagery *(sic-sic-sic)* right up to here, there and everywhere, are a rotting corpse dredged up from an early '70s campus cocktail rave; an airbrushed squashed-furry-animal, picked up and posing around in damp flora and futurism. One doesn't have to strain one's Op Art earrings very far to hear one's favourite Harley, Ferry, Feat and Cale traces. Whoops, broke the glass slipper . . . and it *has* gone midnight!

Got to laugh, ain'tcha? Or cry.

Ian Penman

Single: AT HOME HE'S A TOURIST EMI 2956

ON THE OTHER SIDE:-

IT'S HER FACTORY

HE FILLS HIS HEAD WITH CULTURE!
HE GIVES HIMSELF AN ULCER!

GANG OF FOUR 4

Big names blow it . . .

STEVE CROPPER, ALBERT KING, POP STAPLES
Jammed Together *(Stax)*
JAN AKKERMAN
Live *(Atlantic)*
BRUFORD
One Of A Kind *(Polydor)*

'Jammed Together' is a reissue of a 1969 Stax supersession with the three guitarists playing along on an assortment of soul and blues tracks, and throwing in one vocal apiece.

Albert King wasn't too keen on the album and it's not hard to guess why. Nobody steps out or takes any risks; it's all very relaxed, modest and polite. Still, with such a trio of virtuosos, it couldn't be a bad record; and there's plenty of fascinating music on hand.

Akkerman's 'Live' album, recorded at the Montreux Festival, for me has none of the intelligence or passion of jazz, nor any of rock's visceral excitement. Instead, it contains six slick, soulless, techno-clean instrumentals with Akkerman backed by bass, drums, keyboards and a particularly weedy sax. They slide through their paces with due efficiency, but their purpose remains exclusive.

As it does on 'One Of A Kind.' Bill Bruford has a history going back through The National Health, King Crimson, Yes and Genesis; this album remains stolidly within that genre of cosy, gently bombastic instrumental rock. It's unassumimg, very pleasant and occasionally quite meaty; but it slips by too easily, without a sense of urgency or much of a point.

His second 'solo' album, also features Dave Stewart (from The National Health) on keyboards, Allan Holdsworth (then from UK) on guitar and Jeff Berlin (from Bruford's previous solo) on bass. The music is, of course, 'accomplished'; but despite a whimsical humour and sufficient melodic touches to soothe the ear, there's nothing really to make you laugh or cry, dance or think. A sort of intelligent mood-music.

Graham Lock

BETTE MIDLER
Broken Blosson *(Atlantic)*

Bette Midler is about nightclub sleaze — a self-imposed facade that's hung with cigar smoke and steeped in melancholic Manhattan. Bette Midler is about decadence, locked doors and phones off the hook. Bette Midler is about to take a dive if she goes on making records like this one.

Not that it's entierly disposable — about a quarter is very good — it's just that, for the rest, she's content to wallow in the most appalling sentimental slush. Its syrup-like consistency sounds at best ('Paradise') like an over-orchestrated Abba and, at worst ('A Dream Is A Wish Your Hearts Makes'), like some lovelorn cartoon heroine in search of Alka Seltzer.

Dodge such disaster areas for 'Make Yourself Comfortable', which seductively restates the principle Midler creed, and a supreme Tom Waits tune 'I Never Talk To Strangers', co-starring the man's own gravel-toned Satchmo impersonation and sparse, backroom piano against an alluring jazz drum shuffle.

Mark Ellen

Hong Kong rosary beads don't make it

YACHTS
Yachts *(Radar)*

It's naked scouse chauvinism, maybe, but I'd have loved to like this album.

Every night I hope and pray, please God send a few decent Liverpool bands our way, or at least a horrible plague to wipe out Leeds and Manchester and silence their insufferable crowing. But (blasted Hong Kong roasary beads) still nothing happens.

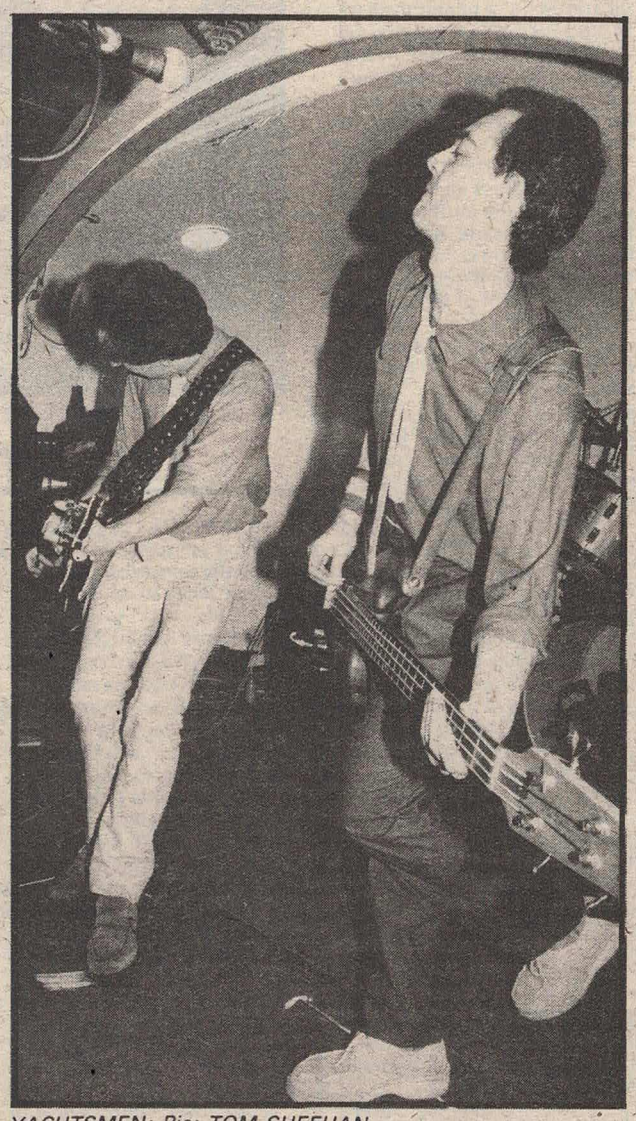
Not enough, anyway. So it was with high hopes and renascent civic pride that I investigated local boys Yachts last year, spurred on by the shiny promise of that Stiff debut 'Suffice To Say' and the subsequent 'Look Back In Love (Not In Anger)'.

On stage, as I discovered, they're all breezy-bright and squeaky-clean, short of sleeve and perky of demeanour. All, is endless, endless summer.

And if that sounds pretty terrible to you then it isn't meant to, because evenings with Yachts are Big Fun and safely recommendable to anybody. What this group is about is brash, sparkling pop celebration: you sort of move around to them and it makes you feel happy and stuff.

Aye, grand lads, a good turn. But I still don't like this album; it's colourless and it doesn't bite. The thing's so polished you can see your face in it, but not much else. It's produced by Richard Gottehrer but it's boring and I'm disappointed.

The culprit must be the material: one dozen three minute ditties and nary a gripper among them, just an incessant succession of one-speed, keyboard-strangled anonymity.



YACHTSMEN: Pic: TOM SHEEHAN

Lyrically they seem prepared to limit themselves to the trite affairs of suburban adolescence, all treated with an earnest articulacy, an awkward literacy — sticking in words like 'coincidence', 'particular', 'cynical' or 'tantamount', which sit too uneasily in the glibness of their context.

Yachts are a group with ingenuity and wit, with humour and personality. So where's it all hiding? This first LP sounds like intelligence gone dry. I realise I can't mention 'powerpop' for the fear of a 16-ton weight on my head or something. But, really, is this record such a progression?

By their enforced simplicity the songs betray their own lack of inner strength. The vocal harmonies are mechanical and characterless. Henry Priestman's shrill, nasally organsound gets way too much attention, leaving no room for creative contributions by the two Martins, Watson and Dempsey, on guitar and bass respectively. Bob Bellis is given a bumpy, thumping drum noise and that's OK.

And that's it; there's nothing down for you, lads, not for now.

Y'knowerramean, like?

Paul Du Noyer

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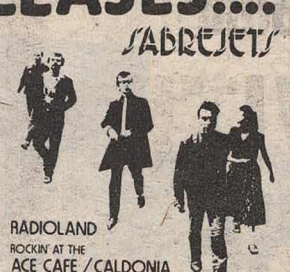

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IAN PENMAN looks back at ROBERT WYATT'S two solo albums.

ROBERT WYATT
Rock Bottom *(Virgin)*
Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard *(Virgin)*

"Words liberate sound. They're a great textural help." — Robert Wyatt, 1976.

Robert Wyatt drummed in Soft Machine, shaped Matching Mole and, in early 1973, fell from a fourth storey window, breaking his back. He lost the use of his legs, and was confined to a wheelchair.

That much is history.

'Rock Bottom', released in the summer of 1974, was Wyatt's return to making some kind of public music: an album which was both a way out of confinement and a way into dealing with the problems he faced because of it — a new pool of tide marks and questions.

'Rock Bottom' touches its problems like a vein, providing the impulse for thought and projectivity. As a whole, it has a *presence* and suggests a central source, a heart not of the usual rock music darkness. This isn't a 'Berlin' or a 'Low'; the only habits Wyatt struggles with are those of intellectual and physical life: dialectic rhythms. The music circled around 'Rock Bottom' has little in common with standard rock and roll.

In 'Sea Song' the ultramarine metaphor places us gently onto the rocky bottom landscape. It is an immediate sketch of the projected use of words and sounds, an index of recognisable problems. The soundings of this displaced 'love song' screen sexual interest and imagination together, using a spray of metaphor that considers common difficulties with need, dependence, interest, repression and space.

In 'Sea Song' — and throughout the album — personal subjectivity is shattered, deliberately; the 'subject' is literally taken apart, deconstructed. Wyatt does this with language, and his voice. The voice is used as an instrument, separated from the stepping stones, words, we're accustomed to have it provide us with; it is a hungrily unformal and teasing voice, and has that intangible, sunken sense of timing found in only a few other places — Smokey Robinson, Tim Buckley, Martin Carthy — splashing, wishing, frowning and sometimes losing itself.

In 'A Last Straw', the dusky metaphor tugs us off the sand, nearer the hard, black road. Images of childhood, its temptations and distorted memories — *'Seaweed tangle in a home from home/Reminds me of your rocky bottom.'* — are suddenly dashed away, carried along in the resonant slipstream of 'Little Red Riding Hood Hit The Road', which is fast and painful.

Language loses grip altogether, sounds replace words, sentences surface from the rushing incoherence — *'So why did I hurt you — I didn't mean to hurt you.'* — but the spiral doesn't stop and only a numbing helpless interior distress is left: *'Don't say/Oh gawd/Don't tell me/Oh dear me/Heavens above/Oh no/I can't stand it/Stop please/Oh deary me/What in heaven's name/Oh blimey/Mercy me/Poor old me/Oh dear/Stop it . . .'*

(People with spinal injuries aren't given pain-killing drugs for up to two days after their accident, in order to help the doctor determine the degree of harm sustained . .)

'Alifib' submerges fully in to the subconsciousness, into the structures of a dream-language. Everyday-language softens into childish, looking-glass linguistics; onomatopoeia rounds off hard 'sense' into a fairy tale, overbrimming with inferences, jokes, odd reflections, a peculiar, mythical sort of vocabulary, it communicates clearly nonetheless.

'Alifib' and its partner 'Alife' slide meaning over meaning, memory over experience, keeping the *real* significance present, but hidden.

A harsh beam of sax pulls 'Alifib' into 'Alife' (alive?) and 'Little Red Robin Hood Hit The Road', a hardly graspable conclusion featuring more memory lanes — *'In the garden of old England/Dead moles lie inside their holes.'* — and an Ivor Cutler poem about the unlikely life of a highwayman (another dream?).

'Rock Bottom' finishes, moving.

'Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard' starts, stirring.

The apparently light-hearted opener, 'Soup Song', is a pessimistic soupcon closer to the home of Alifib's 'larder' than it seems: *'Now there's no hope of getting out of here/I can feel I'm going soft.'*

In between 'Rock Bottom' and 'Ruth' Wyatt had come up against the timelessly tiring obstacles of commercial interest, after the pop success of his interpretative 'I'm A Beliver' 45, and worked too hard to fulfill expectations not entirely of his own raising. The critics of 'Ruth' who complained that it lacked the overall continuity of 'Rock Bottom' had failed to adjust their perspective, and consequently tried to find a view that just wasn't there.

'Ruth' is an understandable jumble: instrumental pieces Wyatt would have wanted to record, regardless of his disablement — Charlie Haden's 'Song For Che', trumpet player Mongezi Feza's 'Sonia', his own 'Solar Flares', his own/Offenbach's '5 Black Notes And 1 White Note', also other pieces which persist in treating the patient.

Central to the second category is 'Team Spirit'. A tune written and recorded for Phil Manzanera's 'Diamond Head' solo album as 'Frontera', 'Team Spirit' was adapted, translated out of its original Spanish and used on 'Ruth'. The musical switch took it from semi-formal rockiness into widescreen modern-jazz weightlessness, and the lyrical switch from the nicely aesthetic to the nastily cathartic: *'Kick me hardy/With that one sweet push from your shine-covered boot/I don't think I just know, I'll be grounded forever.'*

'Team Spirit' ties up fears and inadequacies tightly, insolubly, and loosens the difficulty of communicating them. It is a whole emotional horizon, blind spots and all: *'Be masterful, be my hero, and be/Grateful, honey/If it's tough you want, then it's tough you've got/I mean, if this is only a question of toughness . . ./Survive me, handy/Or deflate me pronto/Beating shit out of me/Takes the hell out of you/If I'm nothing without you, then why stick it out?'*

The horizon on the other side — Richard — is similar, and in fact stranger. The splintered 'Muddy Mouse/Mouth' song cycle seems to take up where Little Red Robin was left whilst obviating the newer album's more forward male/female axis: *'After school you'll find they play hide and seek/Chase each other, clutching in the dark.'*

It is much more densely, morosely lyrical than 'Rock Bottom', and murkier. In the finale 'Muddy Mouth', the narrative spreads out from sleep and darkness (again) into a stumbling recital of the names of all the world's oceans, before admitting: *'I can't remember . . . the names of the others . . .'*

The voice isn't the soar and sigh of 'Rock Bottom', but a series of squeaks; Wyatt tries to reach a note, and can't. The thick undergrowth of themes, images and signs, cubs and brownies, dead forests, oceans and currents, finally reduces to: *'. . . alone, in the dark, hiding in the bog.'*

'Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard' finishes, motionless.

The insight stops there, because Wyatt hasn't recorded since 'Ruth'.

The developments in approach and production of music made by both 'Rock Bottom' and 'Ruth' transcend personal considerations, and limitations. The music is personal, but the personal is sharply political — which makes for (a) change, as far as rock music is concerned. Wyatt was freeing rock language from it's tyranny of repressive myster, from a dictatorship of inflated 'romance' (arrogance masking ignorance) and 'inflicted' selfhood.

The developments of 'Rock Bottom' and 'Ruth' didn't begin — and don't belong — in any rigid framework that had been defined beforehand; in other words, 'rock and roll' isn't a process of reincarnation, but (should be) one of liberation. Not opinion, mate: *team spirit.*

('Rock Bottom' and 'Ruth' are the missing link between Charlie Haden's 'Liberation Music Orchestra' and Ian Dury's 'Do It Yourself'.)

Ian Penman

G

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June
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22nd Friday Penthouse Club, Scarborough
23rd Saturday Nottingham University
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R.D.B.
+ Walking Wounded

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THE MODS + SQUIRE

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+ Scandal

Wednesday June 27th
TOUR DE FORCE
+ Alsations

Thursday June 28th 50p
SPECIAL BRANCH
Dave Flett, Matt Irving, Mark Pinder

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Friday June 22nd
SKINFLICKS
Saturday June 23rd
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Sunday June 24th
EARTHBOUND
Tuesday June 26th
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01-834 5500
Doors open 6pm
Friday June 22nd
Saturday June 23rd
ROGER CHAPMAN
& THE SHORT LIST
+ support Paul Goodman
Doors open 7pm £3
Sunday June 24th
FOLK NIGHT
with
Martin Carthy, The Watersons, John Kirkpatrick, Sue Harris
Doors open 7 pm £3
Tuesday June 26th
CHARLES WILLIAM AINLEY BAND
+ support
Doors open 7pm £3.25
Wednesday June 27th
From America
ALPHONSE MOUZON BAND
+ Gary Boyle Band
Doors open 7 pm £3.50
Thursday June 28th
Blues from Chicago
SON SEALS BAND
+ The Stickers
Doors open 7pm £3.25
Friday June 29th
CHAS 'N' DAVE
+ support
Doors open 7pm £3.25
Saturday June 30th
CANCELLED
ROBERT GORDON
New date to be arranged
Sunday July 1st
MELODY MAKER
National Rock'n'Folk Finals
Doors open 5.30 pm £3

THE **NASHVILLE ROOM**
FULLERS TRADITIONAL ALES

Thursday June 21st 75p
THE JAGS + Mark Andrews & The Gents
Friday June 22nd £1.00
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Sunday June 24th £1.00
SPIZZ ENERGI + PSYCHEDELIC FURS
Monday June 25th £1.00
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Tuesday June 26th £1.00
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Sunday 24th
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Monday 25th
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Thursday 28th
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Bookings: Twist & Shout 01 223 6481

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WALTHAMSTOW, Saxon House June 25th
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MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS MODS
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Leicester Place, off Leicester Square
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THE CHORDS
THE MODS
THE MERTON PARKAS
and **SMALL HOURS**
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Doors open 7.15 pm Bar till 11 pm Admission £1.25

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THURS 21 DINGWALLS 6th BIRTHDAY NIGHT
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FRI 22
SOULYARD
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Monday-Saturday 8pm-2am & Sunday 7pm 11pm.

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PATRIK FITZGERALD PINPOINT & TEARDROP EXPLODES
Tickets £2.00 in advance, £2.25 on the door

PANIC PROMOTIONS PRESENTS
at THE NOTRE DAME
Leicester Place, off Leicester Square
(next to Prince Charles Cinema)
THE SMIRKS
+ 2 SUPPORT BANDS
Monday June 25th
Doors open 7.15pm Bar till 11pm £1.50

HOPE & ANCHOR
UPPER STREET
ISLINGTON, N.1

Thursday June 21st 75p
RUBY
Monday June 25th £1.00
THE BLUES BAND
Friday June 22nd £1.00
PIRANHAS
Tuesday June 26th £1.00
THE CHORDS
Saturday June 23rd 75p
THE CLEANERS
Wednesday June 27th 75p
THE PLANETS
Sunday June 24th 75p
MADNESS
Thursday June 28th 75p
PRAG-VEC

HERMIT LIVE
Brentwood Youth House, Shenfield Road, Brentwood
Friday, June 22nd £1
DOG WATCH
+ special guests Destroyer
Monday, June 25th 50p
BIG WILLS's ROADSHOW

LOUGHTON COLLEGE S.U.
Borders Lane, Loughton
Presents
SCRAMBLED EGO
+ MANYANA
Disco Bar
Friday June 29th at 8pm
Admission £1.50. *Nearest Tube: Debden*

RAY DORSET and MUNGO JERRY
ON THE ROAD AGAIN
June 22 Crewe & Alsager College
June 26 Hamiltons Club, Birkenhead
June 27 Lancaster University
June 28 University of Warwick
June 29 Reading University

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Thursday

Ayr Darlington Hotel: **Black Gorilla**
Birmingham Barbarella's: **The Records**
Birmingham Odeon: **Third World**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **The Clinic**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Brentwood Hermit Club: **The Crooks**
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: **The Gods**
Burntwood Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Chesterfield Fusion: **Voyager**
Clacton Barbarella Suite: **Dave Berry & the Cruisers**
Corby Festival Hall: **Johnny & The Hurricanes/Del Shannon**
Derby Ajanta Club: **UK Subs**
Doncaster White Hart: **Reflex**
Edinburgh Odeon: **Steve Hackett**
Fareham Collingwood Club: **High Flames**
Fennel St. Manch Pips Disco: **Scorched Earth**
Glasgow Dial Inn: **Underhand Jones**
Glastonbury Festival, Somerset (for three days: **The Only Ones/The Pop Group/The Good Missionaries/Steve Hillage/Nik Turner's Sphynx/Sky/John Martyn/John Cooper Clarke/Linda Lewis/Carol Grimes/Robin Williamson Band plus many others and surprise guests**
Gosport John Peel: **64 Spoons**
Hemel Hempstead Pavilion: **Rockpile with Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe/Lew Lewis Reformer**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **Yachts**
Hull Cavalier Club: **Wayne Fontana & The Mindbenders**
Kennoway Burns Lounge: **Snapshots**
Leeds Fan Club: **Essential Logic**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **25 Rifles**
Leeds Fox's Club: **Natural High**
Leicester College: **Sore Throat**
Liverpool Eric's: **Patrik Fitzgerald/The Teardrop Explodes**
London Camden Brecknock: **Take Away**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Fischer-Z**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Special Branch**
London Chiswick Keep Rock Club: **Scandal**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Dafne & The Tenderspots**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Mainland**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Dire Straits**
London Hammersmith The Swan: **Thieves Like Us**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Strangeways**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Ruby/Speedball**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Lacey's Allstars**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Jags/Mark Andrews & the Gents**
London Knightsbridge Pizza on the Park: **Martin Taylor & Ike Isaacs**
London Marquee Club: **Human League**
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster: **Rednite**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Peter Tosh**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Lew Hooper Quartet**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Yakety Yak**
London St. Moritz Club: **Red Tape**
London S.W.4 St. Anne's Hall: **Crisis/Reafer**
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: **Big Chief**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **The Wall/The Dials/The Dark/The Debutants**
Margate Winter Gardens: **Judge Dread**
Newcastle Guildhall: **Oasis/Mick Whittaker Band/The 45's/Hotpoints**
Newcastle The Playhouse: **American Echoes**
Norwich Cromwells: **Hi-Tension**
Norwich Flixton Rooms: **The Morrissey-Mullen Band**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Hormones**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Bernie Parry**
Preston K.S.C. Club: **Brian Dewhurst**
Preston The Warehouse: **Prey**
Redruth London Arms: **Dangerous Girls**
Retford Porterhouse: **The Adverts**
Scarborough Penthouse: **Beelzebub**
Sheffield City Hall: **Manfred Mann's Earthband**
Sheffield Limit Club: **John Cooper Clarke/Fashion**
Sheffield University: **The Deaf Aids**
Southampton (Eastleigh) Crown Inn: **The Piranhas**
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **Status Quo**
Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic: **Mandy Morton & The Spriguns**
St. Albans Horn of Plenty: **The O.K. Band**
St. Helens Glassbridge Club: **Death Or Glory/Emergency Exit**
Stonehenge Free Festival (until Monday): **Here & Now/The Pop Group/The Good Missionaries/The Astronoughts/Suze Da Blooz/Danny & The Dressmakers and many more**
Swansea Nutz Club: **Sponooch**
Tonbridge The Harvester: **En Route**
Watford Carey Place: **The Ha-Ha Germs**
Wellingborough Sports & Social Club: **Little Tony & The Tennessee Rebels**
Wolverhampton Holly Bush: **Five Hand Reel**
Worthing The Balmoral: **The Lillettes**

Friday

Aberdeen University: **The Late Show**
Accrington Conservative Club: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Basildon Double Six: **Rednite**
Basingstoke Magnum's: **Thieves Like Us**
Birmingham (Balsall Heath) The New Inn: **Out**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **The Traitors**
Birmingham Newman College: **Ray King & Cimande**

Left: NICKY TESCO of THE MEMBERS
Right: STEVE HACKETT
Below: VAN HALEN

Birmingham (Small Heath) The Sydenham: **The Crack**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Lupus**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **Little Bo Bitch**
Brentwood Hermit Club: **Dog Watch**
Brighton Hanbury Arms: **Woody & The Splinters/The Parrots**
Brighton Top Rank: **Third World**
Bristol Clevedon Youth Club: **The X-Certs/The Review**
Burton 76 Club: **Writz**
Cambourne Trevithick Arms: **Dangerous Girls**
Cambridge Trumpington Village Hall: **Angel Underground/The Klingons-/Witch Talk Deal**
Chelmsford Chancellor Hall: **Little Tony & The Tennessee Rebels**
Congleton Alsager Centre: **Mike Harding**
Coventry Climax Club: **Matchbox**
Coventry Dog & Trumpet: **The X-Certs/The Targets**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **Streetlite**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **Gordon Giltrap Band**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **Voyager**
Dundee Barracuda: **Black Gorilla**
Egham Royal Holloway College: **Rockpile with Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe/Lew Lewis Reformer**
Exeter Rougemont Gardens (afternoon): **Das Schnitz/Red Tape**
Huthwaite Working Men's Club: **Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels**
Hutton Champagne & Chips: **Brian Dewhurst**
Kettering Windmill Club: **The Bearshank Band**
Kingston Noise Factory: **Pinpoint**
Knaresborough Folk Club: **Marie Little**
Leicester University: **The Tourists**
Letton Yew Tree Farm: **Gerry & The Pacemakers**
Lincoln A.J.'s Club: **The Specials**
Liverpool Crosby Folk Club: **Five Hand Reel**
Liverpool Eric's: **Yachts/The Edge**
Liverpool Masonic Arms: **Lies All Lies**
Liverpool Polytechnic: **The Jags**
Llanmartin Underwood Club: **Crazy Cavan & The Rhythm Rockers**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Acton The Windmill: **Sad Among Strangers**
London Battersea Arts Centre: **Last Call**
London Camden Brecknock: **Canis Major**

HIGHLIGHTS

● ***VAN HALEN*** *begin a series of headlining concerts, dispensing their heavy-metal sounds at Birmingham (Monday), Newcastle (Tuesday) and Manchester (Wednesday).*

● ***STEVE HACKETT*** *follows his recent chart success with a well-timed concert tour, opening at Edinburgh (Thursday), Sheffield (Friday), Leicester (Saturday), Liverpool (Sunday), Brighton (Monday) and Hemel Hempstead (Wednesday).*

● ***THE MEMBERS,*** *with bassist Chris Payne now fully fit after his recent indisposition, kick off another UK outing at Sheffield (Tuesday) and Wolverhampton (Wednesday).*

● ***WIRE*** *are back on the road after a long absence, and their latest gig series begins at Manchester (Saturday) and Nottingham (Monday).*

● ***SYLVESTER,*** *the world's most outrageous disco artist (so he says), is back in Britain. First dates in his tour are at Swindon (Friday), London (Saturday), Blackpool (Sunday), Newcastle (Monday) and Middlesbrough (Tuesday).*

● ***BETTE BRIGHT*** *and The Illuminations always live up to their name on the gig circuit, and their latest outing finds them initially at Newport (Tuesday) and Wolverhampton (Wednesday).*

● ***THE ADVERTS*** *make their first London appearance of the year, when they headline a one-off at the Music Machine in Camden on Saturday.*

● ***IAN DURY,*** *last but not least, opens his mammoth tour. See next page for details.*

London Camden Dingwalls: **Tour de Force**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **London Blitz**
London Camden Music Machine: **Little Bob Story/Private Vices**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Ricky Cool & The Icebergs**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Sunday Band**
London Greenwich Well Hall Open Theatre: **Boys Of The Lough**
London Hampstead Westfield College: **Mike Absalom**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Mark Andrews & The Gents**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Piranhas**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Cramps/Vermillion & The Aces**
London Leicester Square Notre Dame Hall: **The Chords**
London Lewisham Black Bull: **Stormforce**
London Marquee Club: **Human League**
London North Kensington Portobello Basement Club: **The Details**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Peter Tosh**
London Regents Park Bedford College: **The Stickers**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Brian Lemon Quartet**
London Southwark Folk Festival (for two days): **Shirley & Dolly Collins/John Foreman/Dave Burland/Chris Foster etc.**
London Tottenham White Hart: **Yakety Yak**
London Trafalgar Square St. Martins-in-the-Field Folk Festival (for three days): **Tannahill Weavers/Johnny Silvo/Brenda Wootton/Patent Remedy etc.**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Spooky**
London Victoria The Venue: **Roger Chapman & The Shortlist**
London Woolwich College: **Peter & The Test Tube Babies/The Merton Parkas**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Manfred Mann's Earthband**
Manchester The Factory: **The Mekons**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **The Rock 'n' Roll Circus**
New Brighton Empress Club: **Dick Smith Band**
Newcastle Eldon Square: **Roxoff**
Newcastle Guildhall: **White Heat/Disguise/Hot Snax/The Weights**
Newcastle Mayfair Ballroom: **The Real Thing**
Newcastle Northern Counties College: **The 45's**
Newport (Shropshire) Village Club: **The Records**
Norwich Bridge House: **Chas & Dave**
Norwich Folk Festival (for three days): **Michael Chapman/Pete Atkin/Watersons/Brenda Wootton/Derek Brimstone/Dave Swarbrick/Bob Davenport/Hot Vultures/Roaring Jelly and many more**
Norwich Whites: **Wooden Force**
Nottingham Outlaws: **Art Failure**
Nottingham Sandpiper: **Patrik Fitzgerald/The Teardrop Explodes**
Oxford Linacre College: **Corkscrew**
Ramsgate Van Gogh: **Die Laughing**
Reading Berkshire Midsummer Folk Festival (for three days): **Muckram Wakes-/Bully Wee/Bill Caddick/Johnny Collins/Mike Yeates etc.**
Reading Target Club: **Between Pictures**
Reading University: **Supercharge**
Rhyl Talardy Hotel: **Sponooch**
Royston Meldreth Manor School: **Acker Bilk Band**
Scarborough Lemon Tree: **Natural High**
Scarborough Penthouse: **Fischer-Z**
Scunthorpe Community Centre: **Chain Of Dots/The Bits/Exit**
Sheffield City Hall: **Steve Hackett**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Straight 8**
Sheffield University: **Chas & Dave**
Shotts Treble J Hotel: **Hazzard**
Slough Langley College: **Gonzalez**
Southend Minerva: **Flying Saucers**
South Petherton Folk Festival, Somerset (for three days): **Bully Wee/Roy Harris-/Joy Hyman/Andy Card/White Cockade etc**
Stevenage Locarno: **J.A.L.N. Band**
Swansea Hafod Inn: **The Mad**
Swindon Brunel Rooms: **Sylvester**
Walsall Town Hall: **Quartz**
Wednesbury Town Hall: **Eazie Ryder**
Wigan Mr M's: **Franc Blanc**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **The Lurkers**
York Derwent College: **Radio Stars/Black Slate/Defunked/Ethel The Frog/Tone Deaf & The Idiots/Roy Bailey/Martin Simpson etc.**

Saturday

Barkingside Old Maypole: **Matchbox**
Barrow Rugby Club: **Ray King & Cimande**
Basildon Double Six: **Dog Watch**
Basingstoke Haymarket Theatre: **Rupert with 'A Tribute To Elvis'**
Basingstoke Vyne School: **Flying Saucers**
Bexhill De La Warr Pavilion: **Johnny & The Hurricanes/Del Shannon**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Diamond Head**
Birmingham (King's Heath) Hare & Hounds: **Short Wave Band**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Strider**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Birmingham The Sydenham: **Crazy Cavan & The Rhythm Rockers**
Birmingham University: **Ricky Cool & The Icebergs/Mike Absalom**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Destroyer**
Blackburn Whitton Park: **The Lurkers**
Bracknell Sports Centre: **Gonzalez**
Brighton Cage Skatepark: **The Chefs/Smeggy's Nice Bits**
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: **The Wild Beasts**
Bristol Granary: **Corkscrew**
Cambridge Queen's College: **Black Slate**
Carlisle Twisted Wheel: **Snapshots**
Cheltenham Whitcombe Lodge: **John Cooper-Clarke/Fashion**
Chester Arts Centre: **Stinky Winkles**
Chiddingly Six Bells: **The Lillettes**
Chislehurst The Caves: **Nothing Fancy**
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: **90° Inclusive**
Derby Ajanta Club: **Patrik Fitzgerald/The Teardrop Explodes**
Dudley J.B.'s Club: **The Records**
Exeter Rougemont Gardens (afternoon): **The Fans/Dangerous Girls/Wizzo**
Glasgow Strathclyde University: **The Late Show**
Haverfordwest Masonic Hall: **High Flames**
Ipswich Tracey's: **J.A.L.N. Band**
Jacksdale Grey Topper: **The Specials**
Kinghorn Cuinzie Neuk: **Underhand Jones**
Kings Lynn Technical College: **Chris Barber Band**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **John Grimaldi's Cheap Flights**
Leeds Staging Post: **The Accelerators**
Leicester Phoenix Theatre: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Leicester Polytechnic: **Chas & Dave**
Leicester University: **Steve Hackett**
Liverpool Eric's: **Original Mirrors/The Mekons**
Liverpool Everton Football Club: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers**
Liverpool The Masonic: **Prey**
Llanelli Glen Ballroom: **Natural High**
London Battersea Arts Centre: **Steps**
London Camden Brecknock: **The Helicoptors**
London Camden Music Machine: **The Adverts**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Dangerous Rhythm**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Immigrant**
London Deptford Kings Head: **The Details**
London Ealing Old Hat: **The Rest**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Spped-O-Metors**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Little Bob Story/Private Vices**
London Greenwich Trident Hall Theatre: **Marian Montgomery Quartet**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Sylvester**
London Hammersmith The Swan: **London Zoo**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Pinpoint**
London Lewisham Black Bull; **Little Tony & The Tennessee Rebels**

CONTINUES OVER . . .

DURY DOES IT HIMSELF

Massive tour opens

IAN DURY and The Blockheads defy convention this week, when they set out on a huge nationwide tour, running right through to the middle of August. This is traditionally the period when the big names avoid the tour circuit like the plague — either by cashing in abroad, or shutting themselves in the recording studio, or simply going on holiday.

But Dury dispenses with all that nonsense — and the fact that he'll be one of the very few big names doing the rounds, in what we might loosely term the summer, makes his tour all the more welcome. You'll find Ian and the band initially at Newcastle (Sunday and Monday) and Leeds (Wednesday) — with another 33 dates still to come!

GIG GUIDE — continued

— and more festivals, too

TWO OF THE summer's more intriguing festivals are under way today (Thursday). The first is the Glastonbury Fayre in Somerset, which lasts until Saturday with admission at £5. The other, not so far away in Wiltshire, is the Stonehenge Free Festival which runs through to Monday. The success of both events is largely dependent on the weather — but you'd better play it safe and take a mac and wellies. More details of both festivals in News Desk on page 4.

London Marquee Club: **Vermillion & The Aces/Neon**
London North-East Polytechnic: **Tour de Force**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Third World**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Tony Coe Quartet**
London Southall Hamborough Tavern: **The Injections**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Spooky**
London Victoria The Venue: **Roger Chapman & The Shortlist**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Inmates / The Cannibals**
London W.10 Acklam Hall: **Sabrejets/ Roxoff/American Echoes**
Malvern Winter Gardens: **Rockpile with Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe/Lew Lewis Reformer**
Manchester Osbourne Club: **Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels**
Manchester The Factory: **Wire**
Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **The Rock 'n' Roll Circus**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **The Tourists**
Nantwich The Studio: **Sponooch**
New Brighton Dale Inn: **Dick Smith Band**
Newcastle Guildhall: **Southbound/Tygers Of Pan Tang/Raven**
Northallerton Sayers Club: **Little Bo Bitch**
Northampton The Romany: **Spring Offensive**
Nottingham Boat Club: **Paris**
Nottingham Sandpiper: **Brian James & The Brains**
Oldham Colliers Cross: **Tanx**
Oxford Oriole College/ **Son Seals Band/Cygnus**
Oxford Queen's College: **Black Slate**
Oxford St. Edmonds Hall: **Amba**
Oxford Teddy Hall: **Radio Stars**
Passfield Royal Oak: **The Little Jimmies**
Poole Brewers Arms: **Tours**
Port Talbot Troubadour: **Voyager**
Reading Bulmershe College: **Writz**
Reading Target Club: **Dealer**
Retford Porterhouse: **The Jags**
Seaford Constitutional Hall: **Acker Bilk Band**
Sheffield Halifax Hall: **The Parts/Vendino Pact/The Must Be Russians**
Sheffield Highcliffe Hotel: **Five Hand Reel**
Stafford Madeley College: **Superchage**
St. Albans Belmont School: **Foggy**
St. Albans City Hall: **Chas & Dave**
St. Albans Horn of Plenty: **The Crooks**
Stonehaven Commodore Hotel: **Shake**
Taunton Cellar Bar: **Close Rivals/Deadly Toys**
Ulverston Royal Hotel: **Brian Dewhurst**
Watford Mex's: **Russel Bunkers Flying Disco Band**
Wellington Town House: **Pressure Shocks**
Winchester Theatre Royal: **Thieves Like Us**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
Wolverhampton Polytechnic: **Yachts/The Edge**
York College Hall: **Ziggy Heroe**

Sunday

Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prima Donna**
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: **The Crack**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Blackpool Tiffany's: **Sylvester**
Bradford Royal Standard: **The Wall**
Brighton Buccaneer: **The Piranhas**
Bristol Lacarno: **Rockpile with Dave Edmunds and Nick Lowe/Lew Lewis Reformer**
Bromley Churchill Theatre: **Chris Barber Band**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott and Ian Ellis**
Cardiff New Theatre: **Heathcliffe**
Chesterfield Aquarius: **Billy J Kramer**
Christchurch Jumpers Tavern: **Thieves Like Us**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Tony Bennett**
Croydon Greyhound: **Flying Saucers**
Douglas (Isle Of Man) Palace Lido: **The Real Thing**
Dumfries Stagecoach: **The Tourists**
Exeter Rougemont Gardens (afternoon): **The Brainiac Five / Lip Service / Tight Shoes**
Exeter University: **Dangerous Girls**
Huddersfield Albion Hotel: **Reflex**
Isle of Wight Lakeside Club: **Crazy Cavan and The Rhythm Rockers**
Jacksdale Grey Topper: **The Jags**
Keswick Century Theatre: **Brian Dewhurst**
Largs Royal Hotel: **Underhand Jones**
Leeds Victoria Hotel (lunchtime): **Best Friends**
Leicester University: **Son Seals Band**
Liverpool Dove and Olive: **Dick Smith Band**
Liverpool Empire Theatre: **Steve Hackett**
Liverpool United Biscuits Club: **Natural High**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Camden Brecknock: **Sucker**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Remus Down Boulevard**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles (for four days)**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Nothin' Fancy**
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: **Dionne Warwicke**
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: **Dog Watch**
London Finchley Torrington: **The Inmates**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Little Acre**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Little Bob Story/Private Vices**
London Islington Hope and Anchor: **Madness**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Psychedelic Furs**
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster: **Earthbound**
London Palladium: **Lata Mangeshkar**
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): **Blue Moon**
London Rainbow Theatre: **Third World**
London SE1 Duke of Clarence: **The Leopards**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Johnny Parker**
London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: **The Lurkers / The Chords / Back To Zero**
London Victoria The Venue: **Martin Carthy / Sue and John Kirkpatrick.**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Jed Ford/ Kentuchy County**
Manchester The Factory: **The Cramps**
Melrose Open-Air Benefit: **The Visitors/ TP1/Vingibus**
Newcastle City Hall: **Ian Dury and The Blockheads**
Newcastle Guildhall: **Junco Partners / Sabrejets / Roxoff / American Echoes**
Newcastle The Red House: **Hot Snax**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Norwich Whites: **Riff Raff**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Medium Medium**
Oxford College of Further Education: **Patrik Fitzgerald/The Teardrop Explodes**
Portsmouth Rotary Club: **Close Rivals/ Deadly Toys**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Alex Campbell/Gentleman Soldier**
Prestatyn Sands Holiday Camp: **Dave Berry and The Cruisers**
Ramsgate Granville Theatre: **Johnny and The Hurricanes/Del Shannon**
Reading Target Club: **Motley Crew**
Scunthorpe Folk Club: **Five Hand Reel**
Sheffield Penthouse: **Little Bo Bitch**
Southampton Holbury Old Mill: **Scandal**
Tunbridge Wells Rowley's Wine Bar: **The Race**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **Mike Absalom**
Watford Palace Theatre: **Terry Lightfoot Band**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Freebird**
Birmingham Odeon: **Van Halen**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Video**
Blackpool Winter Gardens: **George Hamilton IV (for a summer season)**
Brighton Dome: **Steve Hackett**
Bristol Colston Hall: **Third World**
Carlisle Mick's Club: **Five Hand Reel**
Coatbridge Beechwood Bar: **Underhand Jones**
Edinburgh Tiffany's: **The Tourists / Another Pretty Face**
Exeter Routes: **Cuckoo / Lip Service / Tight Shoes / Grease Lightning / Footsbarn / Incubus**
Farnham Redgrave Theatre: **Chris Barber Band**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Ipswich Tracey's: **Gotham City Swing Band**
Kingston Noise Factory: **Neon**
Leeds (Yeadon The Peacock: **Sly Fox**
Leicester Romeo & Juliet: **Gonzalez**
Leicester University: **The Records / The Sinceros / The Late Show**
Liverpool The Crown: **The Clerks**
London Bermondsey Apples & Pears: **Stan's Blues Band**
London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
London Camden Dingwalls: **London Zoo**
London Camden Dublin Castle: **The Dials**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Mods / Squire**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Screens**
London Deptford Albany Empire: **The Cannibals**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Bob Kerr's Whoopee Band**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Scandal**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Status Quo**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The O.K. Band**
London Putney Half Moon: **Roy Bookbinder**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Waltamstow Saxon House: **Beggar**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Little Bob Story / Private Vices**
London W.1 Maunkberry's: **Susan Black**
Loughborough Rebecca's: **Flying Saucers**
Manchester Band on the Wall: **The Renegades**
Manchester Fagin's: **Dave Berry & The Cruisers (for a week)**
Manchester Free Trade Hall: **John Cooper-Clarke / Joy Division / Fashion**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **The Cramps**
Milford Haven Ferry Inn: **Bully Wee**
Newcastle City Hall: **Ian Dury & The Blockheads**
Newcastle Maddison's: **Sylvester**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Tiffany's: **Wire**
Oundle Red Lion: **The Name**
Petersfield (Rogate) White Horse: **Thieves Like Us**
Reading Caribbean Club: **The Crooks**
Reading Target Club: **Lorelei**
Redcar Old Kent Esplanade: **Little Bo Bitch**
Sevenoaks Black Eagle: **Crazy Cavan & The Rhythm Rockers**
Sheffield Fiesta Club: **Dionne Warwicke**
Southend Zero 6: **Musicians Workshop**
St. Helens Haresfinch Club: **The Accelerators**
Stroud Subscription Rooms: **Son Seals Band**
Tiverton The Motel: **Dangerous Girls**
Wigan The Riverside: **Natural High (for a week)**
Worcester Hideaway: **Voyager**
York Pop Club: **The Jags**

Tuesday

Aberdeen Ruffles: **Shake**
Ambleside Salutation Hotel: **Five Hand Reel**
Barnstaple Queen's Hall: **Cuckoo/Lip Service/Hen's Teeth/Grease Lightning-/Footsbarn/Incubus**
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Killer**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Birmingham Thursday's International Disco: **Billy J. Kramer**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **Dexy's Midnight Runners**
Brighton Afro Club: **Dambala**
Brighton Cage Skatepark: **Dirty Weekend/XL5**
Brighton Richmond Hotel: **Speedball**
Crediton Market House: **Dangerous Girls**
Derby Romeo & Juliet: **Gonzalez**
Dundee Barracuda: **Mainline**
Glasgow Queen's Hall: **The Tourists**
Leeds Fan Club: **Gotham City Swing Band**
London Acton Kings Head: **The Chevrons/Take Away**
London Battersea Park (free open-air, 7.30 pm): **Alan Elsdon Band**
London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Cramps**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Lee Fardon**
London Catford Saxon Tavern: **Nothing Fancy**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Deadringer**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **Writz**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Bagatelle/Sad Among Strangers**
London Greenwich The Mitre: **Chris Barber Band**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Status Quo**
London Hammersmith Palais: **Rockpile with Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe/Lew Lewis Reformer/The Specials**
London Hampstead Westfield College: **Rednite**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Beast**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Chords**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Cygnus**
London New Cross Goldsmiths College: **The Leopards**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts**
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'Beckett: **Stan's Blues Band**
London Ravenscourt Park Summer Theatre: **Hamish Imlach**
London S.E.1 Duke of Clarence: **39 Steppes**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Bud Freeman**
London Tooting The Castle: **The Injections**
London W.1 Maunkberry's: **Lizzie Christian (for three days)**
Maidstone College of Technology: **Tiger Ashby**
Malvern Phoenix Club: **Close Rivals-/Deadly Toys**
Middlesbrough Maddison's: **Sylvester**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **Yachts**
Newcastle City Hall: **Van Halen**
Newport Stowaway: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
Norwich Boogie House: **Little Bo Bitch**
Norwich East Anglia University: **Son Seals Band**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Scandal**
Portsmouth Locarno: **The Records**
Reading Target Club: **Turbo**
Scarborough Penthouse: **The Tourists**
Sheffield City Hall: **The Real Thing**
Sheffield The Marples: **They Must Be Russians**
Sheffield Top Rank: **The Members**
Southend Talk of the South: **J.A.L.N. Band**
Swindon Brunel Rooms: **Corkscrew**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Winchester School of Art: **Alan Clayson & The Argonauts**
Worcester (Wychbold) The Crown: **The Traitors/Out**

Wednesday

Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Bogarts: **Orphan**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **The Leyton Buzzards/Scandal**
Bournemouth Town Hall: **The Specials/-The Late Show**
Bournemouth Village Bowl: **The Records**
Bradford University: **The Jags**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Dials**
Brighton Cage Skatepark: **The Piranhas**
Burton Royall's Theatre Club: **Acker Bilk Band**
Cambridge Garden House Hotel: **Chris Barber Band**
Cardiff Top Rank: **The Real Thing**
Carshalton St Helier Arms: **Billy Lee Riley**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Chesterfield Aquarius: **Billy J Kramer (for four days)**
Clydebank Atlantis: **Snapshots**
Edinburgh Clouds: **Yachts/The Edge**
Gosport John Peel: **Earthbound**
Hazel Grove Youth Centre: **The Moondogs**
Hemel Hempstead Pavilion: **Steve Hackett**
High Wycombe Town Hall: **UK Subs**
Lancaster University: **Supercharge**
Leeds Roots (RAR Club): **The Mekons**
Leeds University: **Ian Dury & The Blockheads**
Liverpool The Masonic: **The Accelerators**
London Camden Brecknock: **64 Spoons**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Trainspotters**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Tour de Force**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Nicky & The Dots/2TV**
London Fulham Cock Tavern: **Trimmer & Jenkins**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Status Quo**
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: **London Zoo**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Free Beer**
London Peckham Montpelier: **Blue Moon**
London Pekcham Newlands Tavern: **Billy Karloff & The Supremes**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dana Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London Shepherds Bush The Trafalgar: **Device**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Bud Freeman**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Beggar**
London Tooting The Castle: **The Little Jimmies**
London Victoria The Venue: **Alphonse Mouzon Band**
London Wandsworth Nero's Palace: **Dog Watch**
London West Ealing Halfway House: **Dangerous Rhythm**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Soul Boys / The Mosquitos**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Van Halen**
Newcastle Madison's: **Souled Out (for four days)**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Oxford Wadham College: **Gonzalez**
Penzance Demelza's: **Cuckoo/Lip Service/Incubus/Grease Lightning-/Footsbarn/Hen's Teeth**
Purley Orchid Ballroom: **Third World**
Reading Target Club: **Alternative Insurance**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Son Seals Band**
Sheffield Top Rank: **Rockpile with Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe/Lew Lewis Reformer**
Slough Blues Club: **Voyager**
Solihull Golden Lion: **The Clinic**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
Staindrop Folk Club: **Five Hand Reel**
Stoke Green Star: **Prey**
Stourport-on-Severn F.C.: **Armpit Jug Band**
Weymouth Dorset Technical College: **The Come Ons**
Wolverhampton Civic Hall: **The Members**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **Bette Bright & The Illuminations**
York Pop Club: **Little Bo Bitch**

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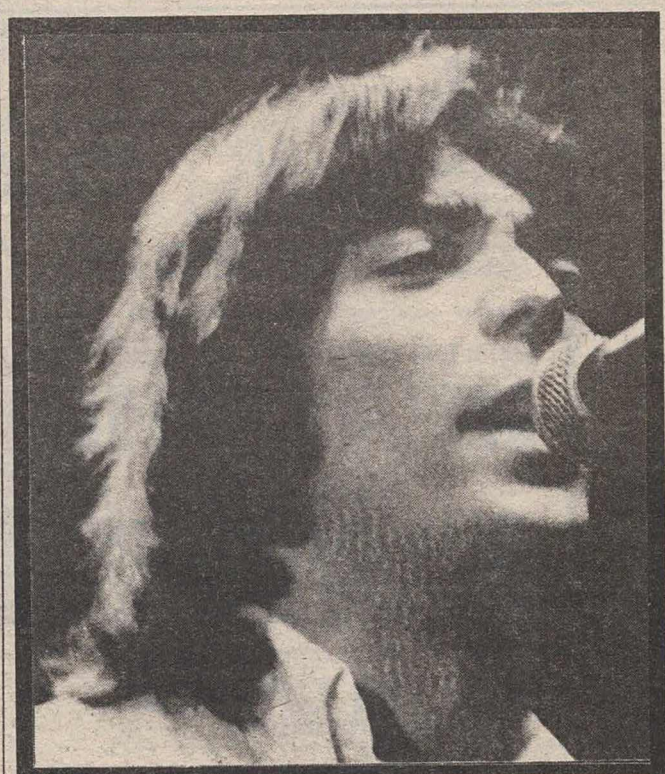

July 6th. 1979 Eric's. Liverpool · July 7th. 1979 Digbeth Civic Hall. Birmingham
July 8th. 1979 Lyceum Ballroom. The Strand London

ISLAND
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21st June Edinburgh Odeon	27th June Hemel Hempstead Pavilion
22nd June Sheffield City Hall	28th June Wolverhampton Civic Hall
23rd June Leicester University	29th June Southampton Gaumont
24th June Liverpool Empire	30th June Hammersmith Odeon
25th June Brighton Dome	1st July Oxford New Theatre

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SAT 23rd SAYERS CLUB, NORTHALLERTON
SUN 24th PENTHOUSE CLUB, HAYMARKET, SHEFFIELD
MON 25th THE OLD KENT, REDCAR
TUES 26th THE BOOGIE HOUSE, NORWICH
WED 27th THE POP CLUB, YORK
FRI 29th J.B.'s CLUB, DUDLEY
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Friday June 22nd £2.20 **LITTLE BOB STORY** + Heroes	Tuesday June 26th £1.20 **INTERVIEW** + The Directors
	Wednesday June 27th £1.20 **STARJETS** + Small Hours

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The Rest of The Loon In June Tour:

Thursday 21st:	Swan, Hammersmith
Friday 22nd:	Magnums, Basingstoke
Saturday 23rd:	Theatre Royal, Winchester
Sunday 24th:	Jumpers Tavern, Christchurch
Monday 25th:	White Horse, Rogate
Tuesday 26th:	Windsor Castle, London
Thursday 28th:	Swan, Hammersmith
Saturday 30th:	Bridge House, Bracknell.

Free limited edition loon cricket trousers for unlucky customers . . .

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and from usual agents

Thursday 26 July at 8·00
— HAMMERSMITH ODEON —
Caroline St., London W6
Tickets – £4·25, £3·25, £2·25
Theatre Box Office Tel: 01 · 748 · 4081
London Theatre Bookings Tel: 01 · 439 · 3371
Premier Box Office Tel: 01 · 240 · 2245
and from usual agents or on night

Saturday 28 July at 7·30
— CALIFORNIA BALLROOM DUNSTABLE —
(In association with ILKA PROMOTIONS)
Tickets – £3·50
Ballroom Box Office Tel: 0582 · 62804
and from usual agents

Monday 30 July at 7·00
— BRIGHTON DOME —
(In association with Brighton Soul Society)
Tickets — £4.00, £3.50, £3.00, £2.50
Theatre Box Office Tel: 0273 · 682127
and from usual agents

dog watch

Friday June 22nd
BRENTWOOD
Hermit Club
Saturday June 23rd
BASILDON
Double Six
Sunday June 24th
EAST HAM
Ruskin Arms
Wednesday June 27th
WANDSWORTH
Nero's Palace
Friday June 29th
OXFORD
College of Further Education

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EARTHBOUND
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June 20th **Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's, W.1**

June 24th **Duke of Lancaster, New Barnet.**

June 27th **The John Peel, Gosport, Portsmouth.**

June 30th **An Open Air Party in Honour Of The Robot**
(In the park of Mr Norton in Kent . . . Sorry, for guests only . . . ring us for invitation)

July 2nd-30th **. . . On the roads of Italy . . . Teatro Cristallo Milan . . . Lecco . . . Palasport Genoa . . . etc . . . etc**
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June
27 St. Helier Arms, Carshalton.
28 Royalty Ballroom, Southgate, London.
29 Trade Union Labour Club, Leicester.
30 Town Hall, Swindon (with special guests).
July
1 Trinity Church, Bristol.
2 Grand Ballroom, Broadstars, Kent.
3 Island Hotel, Isle of Sheppey.
4 White Hart, Uxbridge Rd., Southall.
5 Dingwalls, Camden Town, London.
6 Circus Taven, Plymouth.
7 Liessel, Holland.
8 Turnhout, Belgium.

BRIAN B'S PAGE

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Fri 22nd 50p adm MARK ANDREWS + THE GENTS + SUPPORT OPEN TILL 12pm	Mon 25th Free BEVERLEY DRIVE Close 11 pm
Sat 23rd 50p adm SNEAKY FEELINGS + SUPPORT Open till 12pm	Tues 26th Free THE BAD BAND Close 11pm
WESTBOURNE PARK TUBE	Wed 27th Free BEAST Close 11pm 01-286 8403

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Greg Kihn — *A quiet Zone*

Pic Kel Edge — Pic Al Johnson

It's The Bland World

THE GREG KIHN BAND
With The Naked Eye ***(Beserkley)***

Strung loosely between plagiarism and adaptation you'll find that eternal popster Greg Kihn.

The former keeps him inspired, the latter gives him a sense of purpose, but neither have the individuality that defines identifiable style. Catch anything from his tailored rock 'n' roll, his coasting root-beer pop, or his drive-in ballads, and they make you think of times, places, music, movies — in fact everything except the man who's actually singing them.

Kihn's development from his Beserkley debuts — the shrewdly titled 'Greg Kihn' and 'Greg Kihn Again' — has been measured, positive and mostly entertaining. While running up sizeable credit to a whole spectrum from Merseybeat to CSN&Y, he's traced an erratic course from late '60s acoustic West Coast rock (circa Buffalo Springfield) through to an absorbing, restrained rock 'n' roll pop music.

He writes nostalgic songs in an intelligent, faceless sort of way. If he dared to stray from the security of all his accessible influences, he could write *modern* nostalgic songs.

After 'Next Of Kihn' — his most compact and compelling offer to date — 'With The Naked Eye' pulls very few punches. Where 'Next' clearly divides between the hard-edged and the sentimental, this one shuffles together so many different styles that it's not so much varied as disruptively uneven.

Both sides stumble badly over their opening tracks. The first is Springsteen's powerful 'Rendezvous', given a flat, bleached glazing, and the second is a dreadful reading of 'Roadrunner' — a classic when drawn out by Richman's oblique, defused innocence, but to hear Kihn howling *"I feel in touch with The Modern World"* while reeling out the powerchords sounds almost painfully insensitive.

For the rest, he either redefines or ruins his old, endearing idiosyncrasies. 'Getting Away With Murder' and 'Another Lonely Saturday Night' are both vacuous, parking-lot bop tunes; 'Fallen Idol' sees his usually contained sentimentality get liberally splashed all over the archaic theme of the fading rockstar; and if you removed the frantic hi-hat pattern from drummer Larry Lynch's 'Can't Have The Highs (Without The Lows)' it would sound just like vintage Searchers or Pacemakers.

This leaves only three decent songs — the excellent title track with its jerky bluebeat intro, the strident cabaret 'Moulin Rouge' (can disco be far behind?), and 'Beside Myself', just for the line of which Dan Hicks would be justly proud: *"I'm beside myself 'cos I wanna be next to you."*

The album doesn't consolidate any direction, it just slides carelessly over some familiar ground. More input than output, isn't that the expression?

Mark Ellen

THE ZONES
Under Influence ***(Arista)***

The Zones are a capable and consistent dense-today rock group and they are flashly boring.

The quartet have a Slik history and have remnants of that group's sham sense of the dramatic, blended with a smooth, clogging sense of the exotic and grandiose. They're a sort of blank Magazine or hollow Simple Minds. The Zones — unlike those two who teeter but never slip — have tripped up and over onto the plush carpet of tidy listening, lacking things like versatility, vigour and tension. They are all skill and no thrill.

'Under Influence' is not a passionate record. It contains ten neat songs that flow easily and are easily forgettable. They are, though, well put together; maturely structured, prettily detailed, colourfully splashy with plenty of stubborn assault. Any fizz is fleeting. Strip away the clinical musical clarity and frivolous cleverness and you're left with a few crumbs.

The Zones are an example of the kind of complacent and pointless perpetuation punk sought to overthrow, the kind of mystifying nonsense the resultant sophistication strove to avoid. The Zones operate where skill and cosmetics are the over-riding factors in the making of the music, where the merit of the music is measured by its smoothness and terrific technique.

Such rigidity literally fills me with nausea; listening to this LP for a few days has depressed me no end. I know I shouldn't get so worked up, but I can't help it. I just wish The Zones would smile or something; let their music breathe.

The market place they've opted to work in renders their straight faces and polish absurd. They should swing a little bit, not be ashamed to leave holes.

They can be moderately attractive, as on the closing 'Mourning Star' or the opening 'Do It All Again', but even here, where there's a hint of ebullience, there's little of musical unorthodoxy or surprise, no great vocal distinction — things that are always necessary when the music is so naturally derivative. There's a mild pleasantness in Willy Gardner's vocals, a confident strut in the play of Billy McIsaac (keyboards), Russell Webb (bass) and Kenny Hyslop (drums), but never anything that screams 'listen!' Just a sort of going through the motions discipline, a suffocating precision, a numbing restraint and always a narrow range of sounds and rhythms. In some ways they remind me of The Police, and who can ignore them these days.

So probably The Zones will be very popular, which is what they want, and it's stupid for me to carry on. But I still think they should relax. A bit of collision and chaos in their music would introduce much needed flexibility and open new avenues.

But if The Zones can be comfortable with their blandness, fine. I've enough to adore and absorb, thanks all the same.

Paul Morley

JANNE SCHAFFER
Earmeal ***(CBS)***

PERSEPHONY
"to those who loved us" ***(UPA)***

SUSTAIN
Sustain ***(UAP)***

Janne Schaffer is Swedish, long-golden-haired, and tries to but can't pose very well for his cover-art. His 'Earmeal' is a sterile string of ten finger-exercises for guitar and session music: a tape-measurable series of sounds without the history or fire of jazz, and without the brutality or style of rock.

So remember, it's 'Janne Schaffer' not 'jazz-rock'!

Persephony and Sustain both record for 'Unidentified Artists Productions' of Holland, which "only publishes records if the original work has proved to be as original as it was before recorded ..."

Persephony's accompanying literature clears everything up. It sez: "Unless one is willing to expect something else than up to date popular entertainment, one surely is going to get disappointed". Or what? As it happens, "to those who loved us" features such gems as 'Celestial City Sounds' and 'Unchangeable Change', and is constructed around the timeless timelessness of pained beret-wearers weeping 68 tears in the historical shadow of cafes and Cavafy.

In other words, they like Bob Dylan too.

So do ... *'The sound of footsteps is rising / I hear them knock on my door / Oh look — there's a man with white coats / This is what I've been waiting for!'* ... Sustain.

Sorry, European markets.

Ian Penman

LIVE!

"And sometimes, Linton, dem rock stars leap right out of the page." "I hope so, Vivian. I hope so." Pic Santo Bascone.

Linton Kwesi Johnson

Marquee

In typically reactionary style, the recent documentary *Dread, Beat An' Blood* was postponed by the BBC until well after the Election on account of its staunchly anti-Tory content.

Those lucky enough to have seen it couldn't fail to have been impressed by Linton Johnson's compelling sense of reason and restraint. An incisive and sympathetic portrait, it underlined one of the more unrealised — and vital — characteristics of a man who is often given the breezy media label of "a radical black activist". His is not a struggle for direct retaliation, more for the rational alteration of the conditions that bring about political change.

So it's appropriate in the light of other, less substantial rock / politic platforms — the street brain-assault of The Clash, the inane anarchic gloom of Crass, the mellow liberalism of TRB — that Linton uses the bare minimum on stage to start a landslide in his favour.

There's just himself in academic glasses and straw panama, his poems, his lights, his taped backing music, and the slow, exuberant dancing of the friends he introduces as "The Four Wise Men of Brixton."

He needs no more.

Some poems LKJ recites without even a backing track, the electricity crackling through the silent, reverent audience, proving that the hypnotic metre of his patois lyrics is sufficient to communicate. Very few can write poems that deliberately avoid the standard components of militant propaganda — aspiration to power and control — and yet have such an immediate effect on their listeners.

His poems are proud, methodical, compressed and directly influential.

Although he claims to construct them around a bass rhythm, the quality of his music tends to be overshadowed by his political commitment, which does it a great injustice. The taped tracks he uses, mostly from the 'Forces Of Victory' album, all fall between a crisp, flamboyant frontline of colourful brass, sweeping organ chords and a sinister heavy roots backbone that reflects and propels the lyrics.

It's a short, absorbing, convincing set; and it flows — from the descriptive 'Doun Di Road' to 'It Dread Inna Inglan', an appeal against the unjust conviction of George Lindo, delivered with an air of well-earned celebration after his recent release.

The same insidious pace is sustained by 'Reality Poem' before we are pitched into the unaccompanied 'Independent Intavenshan,' in which a host of political organisations get systematically dismissed with an infectious contempt: *"The SWP can't set we Free / The IMG can't do it for we / The Communist Party, true dem too arty farty."*

Despite leaning a little too heavy on pathos, 'Sonny's Lettah (Anti-Sus poem)' provides the set's most intensely moving moment. Written by a youth on a Sus charge in Brixton jail to his mother in Jamaica, it outlines Linton's deceptively simple, composed way of illustrating black suppression.

The title track follows with its commanding instrumental section, and he concludes three encores with the incessant anti-terrorist chant 'Fite Dem Back.'

"You're much too generous with your applause," he murmurs when given an ecstatic reception.

Even if you're not affected by his politics (which you should be); even if you don't appreciate his music (which is irresistible); even if you don't recognise his achievement as a poet / performer (which is enormous) — you can still only admire Linton Kwesi Johnson.

Mark Ellen

"Some poems LKJ recites without even a backing track, the electricity crackling through the silent, reverent audience, proving that the hypnotic metre of his patois lyrics is sufficient to communicate."

Dire Straits

Hammersmith Odeon

It doesn't take much to conquer America these days: technical proficiency, a smooth sound, an essentially reassuring ambience. Add a few good tunes to a lot of luck, and you're made. Perseverance helps, but it's not always necessary.

Take Dire Straits.

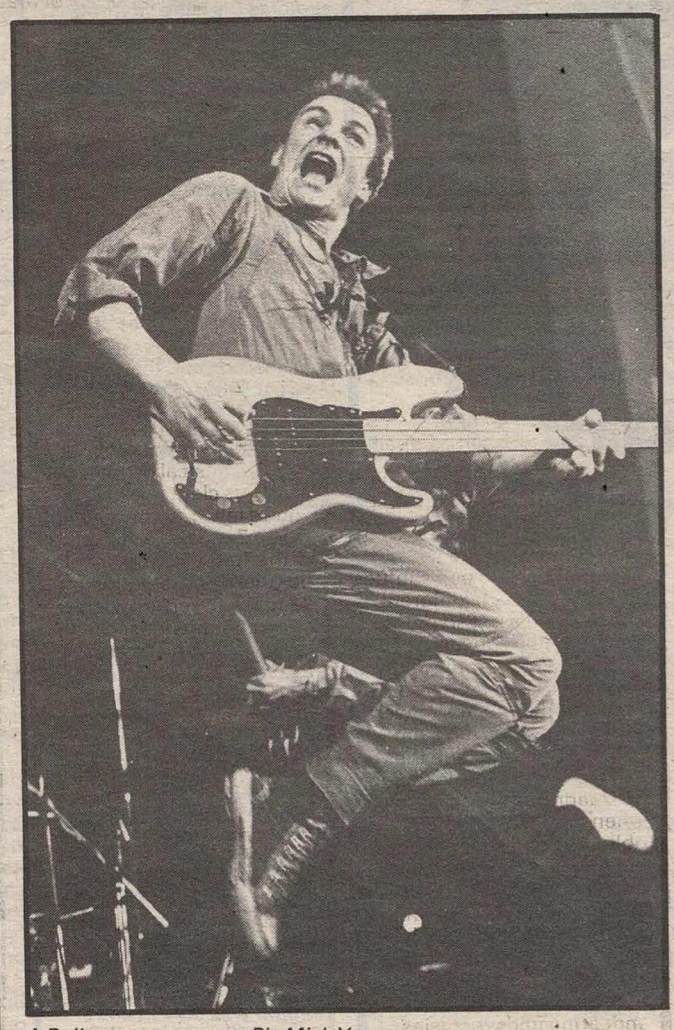
Here's a band modest to the point of nondescript, soothing to the point of soporific. And with an eager frontman who can play romantic, mellow, subtle guitar — golly, it's a wonder they took *so long!*

Mark Knopfler is the band's greatest asset; but that's also their severest limitation. Musically and visually, he's the focal point and the rest of the band stay blandly anonymous. The sidemen sway politely, while Knopfler crouches energetically at the mike or occasionally staggers around the stage in a goofy approximation of The Guitar Hero.

For a time it's entertaining. Then your attention wanders to the light show — a slick, impressive affair that revolves around mixes of red, orange and blue. The overhead beams converge to give Knopfler a neat crown of light. But even all this begins to pall.

It's the same with the music.

Live, Dire Straits have a fuller, less delicate sound: fewer shades, fewer spaces. At times — 'Lady Writer', 'What's The Matter With You Baby' — they sound like a sophisticated form of power-pop. Nearly everything seems faster, more cluttered. Only 'Lions' and 'Wild West End' retain their original quiet charm



A Policeman pounces. Pic Mick Young.

...

So you start to concentrate just on Knopfler's solos. But his guitar gets lost in the rhythm section, loses the warm tone of the records, suffers from a diminished *resonance;* and that's frustrating.

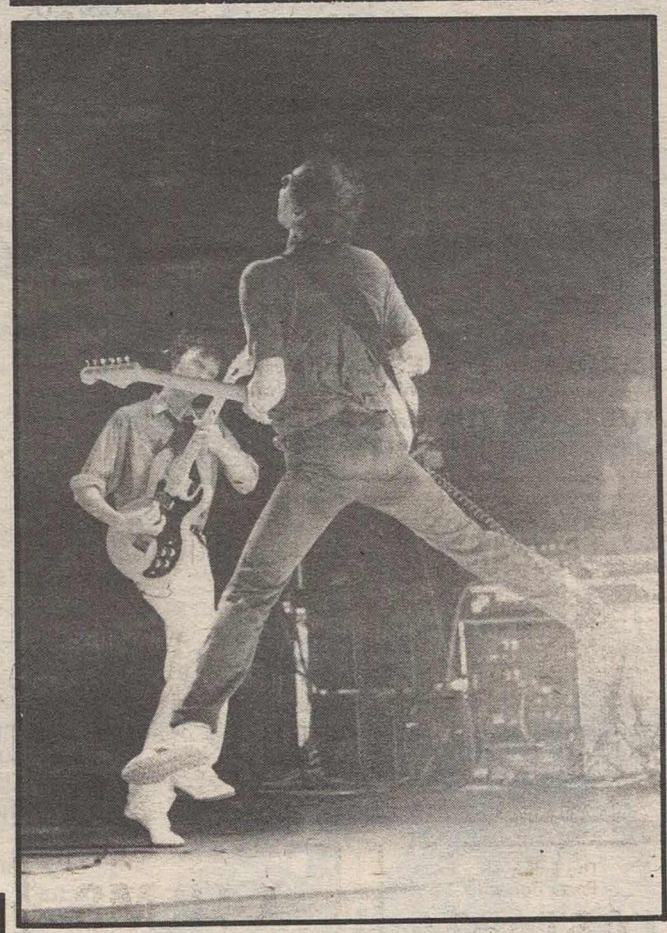
Still, it's on those slightly doomy, gently swinging, atmospheric ballads that Knopfler (and Straits) are at their best. When they try to boogie, it's embarrassing. 'Setting Me Up' is clean and mechanical, devoid of soul. Its companion encore 'Southbound Again' is better, but it still doesn't *move* so much as lurch.

They play all of their first album, most of the second; and it's plain that the debut contains their handful of truly classy songs. Nothing from 'Communique' is of similar worth. Even 'Where Do You Think You're Going', which *sounds* good, is let down by its lyrics — a typical male "love" song, thoroughly patronising and with an undertow of threat.

Some of it was pleasant enough, but going to bed seems to be the natural conclusion of a Dire Straits gig; and I like music that makes you wanna laugh or cry or jump around and shout a bit.

Still, if aural tranquillisers are your idea of salvation, Dire Straits can give you a hefty dose. It"s just that live they aren't quite lethal enough.

Graham Lock



A Strait stretches (cor!) Pic Pennie Smith.

The Police
The Cramps
Bobby Henry

Lyceum

There are various ways of revitalising old-fashioned rock music. Three of them are playing the Lyceum.

Bobby Henry opens the bill with an encouraging but inconsistent set. Firmly rooted in '60s rock, he showers his arrangements with all the components that ought to make them varied (and comtemporary) — brazen dischords, well-timed hooks, disconcerting solos and occasional stumbling rhythms — but ultimately you can't remember a single one of his melodies. He has confidence, a decent band and a very powerful voice, and will hopefully write some songs to match.

Deliberately I assume, the Lyceum sliding roof rolls back to admit a ghoulish half-light as the grotesque Cramps stumble out under the sick green sidelamps.

They epitomise the disposable New York garage formula of slamming together bizarre extremes in the name of instant novelty, and then jetting into the headlines as fast as they'll fade into obscurity. Their lifespan is measured in minutes — minutes to be savoured.

They are the magnetically dumb Ivy Rorschach on guitar; the suave, automaton Nick Fox (drums); the high priest of inane vampire camp, Bryan Gregory on polka-dot flying V; and the seamy, frenetic Lux Interior on tremelo pastiche vocals.

The noise they make is a thick blanket of bassless distortion, tinged with acid offkey sub-Duane Eddy solos and hauled over a lumpy tom-tom beat plus cymbals. It's swiftly reviewed by a concensus below stage, given the universal thumbs-down, and greeted with a hail of phlegm and sprayed lager.

The set lurches towards disruption, with a hideously flecked Bryan Gregory threatening his assailants while the gob visibly thickens

continues over

Still on the beat . . .

A rare shot of The Police off-stage. Pic. Al Johnson

to his every duff note.

Sympathy and helpless laughter cloud the memory, but highpoints were a classic rendition of Jack Scott's 'Way I Walk', and the sight of Lux being dragged squirming from the crowd in the convulsive climax to 'I Was A Teenage Werewolf'.

Farewell Cramps, it's been a sweet romance.

The Police pitch against this shameless mayhem with a show that's suspiciously routine and professional. It seems the nine months of ceaseless slog that have suddenly shot them into the limelight have also denied them the chance to expand their material accordingly.

Their prime assets — Sting's domineering high-register and the band's acute sense of brisk percussive dub/rock — are stretched to unjustified limits to pad out a short and transparently overworked set.

What hits on record is the tension and precision they compress into each sparse four minute package. On stage, they deflate almost every number with tired sections of boogie while Sting explores his echo chamber, and some (notably the ransacked 'Roxanne') have already been tailored for mass audience lead vocal.

Behind all this it's still obvious (and frustrating) that The Police are quite exceptionally competent. Stewart Copeland keeps the drumming clean, sharp and meticulous, the severely underused Andy Summers complements with graphic rhythm guitar, and Sting's bass is effortless, exact and sometimes (as in 'Hole In My Life') surprisingly ambitious. Between them, they leave just enough slack to sound spontaneous.

With these near-perfect criteria, it makes little sense that they lean so heavily on what they invert within the standard rock trio format — soft-centred, self-pitiful lyrics and instrumentals that attempt to seduce rather than assault. The new single 'Message In A Bottle' points them even further in that direction.

When they've sifted through their old songs, installed some new ones and put together a tighter set, The Police will deserve the kind of success they've already achieved.

It's no more than a matter of time.

Mark Ellen

Art Pepper

Hammersmith

Art Pepper last played in Britain 35 years ago and there's no doubt that during this separation we've been the losers. It's now common to say that Pepper has always been underrated, that he's the greatest living white altoist.

But such phrases give no real idea of the man's genius.

At the Hammersmith Jazz Festival he was a *revelation.* His tone and technique were faultless, his style assured, his feeling undeniable. He was ably supported, too, by the Peter Ind Trio. Ind and drummer Alan Ganley laid on springy, relaxed rhythms; while Brian Lemon provided some calm, generous piano.

But the focus was on Pepper.

He stood quite still at the mike, just his head nodding as he blew. By the second number I was transfixed — a beautiful, simple tune treated with a gentle, tight-reined melodic swing. Pepper's solo was cool, telling, heartfelt. Another slow piece towards the end was even better, suffused with a lovely understated tenderness.

Pepper was poised and poignant. His solo seemed to float and cry at the same time with a deceptively off-hand beauty.

On the faster bebop tunes he was never less than ebullient: perky, concise, endlessly inventive. And at the close, stretching out and blowing some devastating horn, his playing was so light, so precise yet liquid, it was like a fabulous, perfectly honed arabesque of sound and emotion — as if all the pain and passion of his years in jail and fighting smack had been distilled into this finely-wrought, almost delicate, grandeur.

To witness such mastery is both rare and exhilarating. There were moments when I wanted to laugh and cry at the same time, unable to cope with his brilliant, carefree purity. And he made it all sound so effortless.

Art Pepper — aural perfection, almost beyond praise. Truly, a jazz master.

Graham Lock

Small Hours

If these unknown quantities could do justice to Graham Parker's 'Soul Shoes' with the master's voice still ringing in my ears, they're doing something right. Even better if their own soul-injected R'n'B and poppier interludes cut it next to certified classics.

It's a big gamble that Small Hours generally make, thanks to vocalist Neil Thompson who knows a good influence when he hears one. Luckily, he keeps his Parkerisms in check while unleashing the tortured tonsils of a suitably (self) possessed man; but only just.

Former-Saint Kym Bradshaw on bass and Jolt drummer Iain Sheddon (on loan) don't mince with the beat and Carol Isaacs fleshed out the already frenetically brimming sound with her Farfisa fills. They might easily be hot property one day but before fanning the sparks, I'd like to hear them with a few more months experience, more upfront guitar from Thompson's bro' Ian and a decent PA; then we'll see about Prime Time.

It's still early days for the Small Hours.

Elissa Van Poznak

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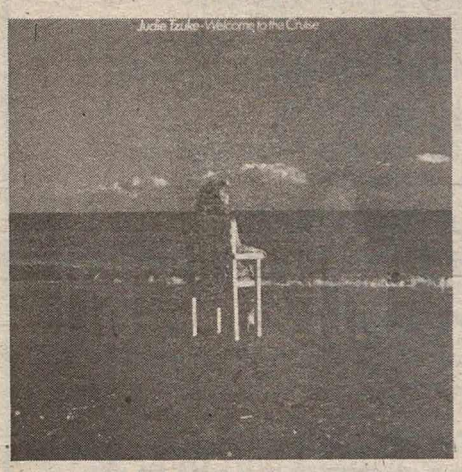

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The Romantics

New York

The Romantics are Detroit kids who obviously kept their ears glued to their AM radios in the mid-60's to develop their pop sensibility, and kept their eyes on the TV for every appearance by a British band on *Shindig* to develop their sense of style. But they also absorbed their city's well-known penchant for bone-crunching hard rock.

The resulting fusion grabs the mind and ears with catchy tunes and ringing guitar harmonies, and hits the body with a relentless, driving beat. And it took only a couple of trips to New York to land themselves a recording contract.

The Romantics do everything right: dress right — on this night, black shirts, black-and-white checkerboard pants and matching ties; play the right guitars, and play them hard. But they don't pose. They take sweet melodies and pound hellfire into them. And no matter how fast and furious things get, they keep their dignity.

Lead singer / guitarist Wally Palmer sings with force and guts. Mike Skills's lead guitar is self-assured, aggressive. But there is no melodrama; no contorted faces or flash showmanship for its own sake. They build on a rhythm till it works up a palpable pressure; and when they get you to the point where you want them, need them, to pull out a blazing solo and give you some release, they do it.

In a set of 14 songs, at least half were potential singles. 'The Girl Next Door' featured Beatles-like call-and-response choruses, but coupled with thrashing guitar and a powerhouse rhythm. And so on through a set that can be compared with The Ramones' in its consistency and power.

It's difficult to employ the melody of what's known as power pop without succumbing to wimpiness, the drive and force of hard rock-heavy metal without becoming pretentious — hence the scarcity of bands that can do either. The Romantics can do both.

Their music has a way of bypassing the mind and going straight to the body, making it do things the mind had not intended.

I stood in front of the Hurrah stage, dutifully trying to take notes on the components of the aural attack that was crashing down around me. But frequently The Romantics would light into a guitar break or a catchy chorus and my body would go into involuntary spasms of leaping and dancing.

When a band can pull that trick on me, I start to get excited.

Richard Grabel

A sludgy Strait. Pic: Rich Prior

The Straits

Hope And Anchor

We're really getting down to the dregs of punk now, y'know; all those nasty little gritty bits at the bottom, harmless enough but leaving a bitter taste in the mouth if you're careless enough to sample any.

Four girls called Suzie (drums) Judy (lead guitar) Shirley (rhythm) and Di (bass) thrashed out a very ordinary, undistilled set which made it difficult to believe that they recently supported and *completed the* TRB tour. Their deadpan, monolithic sound showed not a spark of originality or imagination, and was so ineffectively mixed that it was completely distorted.

This was bandwagon punk at its worst. There were no monotony-breakers or eyebrow-raisers; even Iggy's 'Funtime' was heavily stomped over and flattened to confirm with the rest of their sound and T. Rex's 'Get It On' was simply suffocated.

I experienced a flutter of half-hearted outrage, particularly when what only amounted to sacrilege was repeated . . . but no, best let it go, the less this sort of thing is stirred up the quicker it'll settle into the '76 sludge and quit muddying the waters around worthier bands.

Deanne Pearson

The U.S. enters the '60s with The Romantics. Pic: Julie Scher.

A trip to New York where romance is alive

The Dark
The Tea Set

Pied Bull

First impressions of The Tea Set don't suggest there's much to get yer teeth into.

After a brief exposure to their sketchy 'Cups And Saucers' EP, you'd suspect they'd been spoon-fed with Leyton Buzzards-type 'art school' R & B punk, but without any of the Buzzards self-effacing charm.

Luckily, the live version comes across with enough shambolic fervour to iron out the pretentiousness of their offbeat satirical slant.

Fronting this five-piece is rock-scribe-turned-pop-star (another one?) Nic Egan, who sings with Lydon phrasing and glazed expressions, and attempts gangling dance routines and handstands as if connections between his brains and limbs have long been servered.

Some might call him "a natural".

A high-riding drum sound and tight hawser bass dominate the backing, and with Mark 'Digits' Wilkins adding dramatic keyboard effects, it makes an absorbing sub-structure for some obliquely devious lyrics.

Only rarely do they strike a perfect balance. Most of their numbers are either too clever by half (like 'On Them') and so dismissible, or else (like 'B52G', a list of plane names) are too tediously idiotic and so disposable.

Where The Tea Set border on destroying a carefully contrived spontaneity by over-rehearsal, much of The

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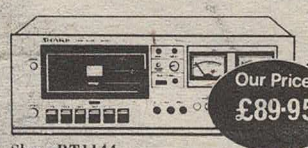

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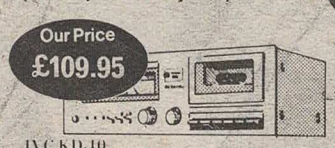

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The Damned: an anarchic celebration of anti-everything. Pic: Al Johnson.

A trip to Brum where damned bums are spotted

Dark's appeal is derived from the freshness and obvious uncertainty of their whole approach.

"I'm not yet sure what to do on stage," frontman Jon Flanegan tells me later. "Maybe I should jump around a lot more."

This is their seventh gig.

The Dark are an unlikely mixture of the unassuming Flanegan (V-neck pullover, nervous); the lanky, reckless Billy O'Neil (guitarist and Rush fanatic); the impatiant Jamie Kane (drums); the earnest rhythm guitarist Andy Riff, and the exuberant Phil Langham on bass.

Trading solely on a sharp, unrefined garage sound, they play dance rock-punk, somewhere between the raw backbone of early Pistols and the colour and charisma of The Undertones.

At the mercy of a diabolical PA, they turn in an uninspired, indistinct first half. All I can identify is a slow, disarming heavy pop tune ("a song for Romantics"), 'Not Love', that doubles time mid-way, and 'Fat Girls', the rhythm of which owes a lot to the Pistols' 'Submission'.

The second half is a transformation, with both 'John Wayne' and 'Be A Man' finally giving the erratic O'Neil enough room to move. When not immersed in intentional feedback, he hauls out a couple of compact, descriptive solos that are no mean achievement on a guitar so wildly out of tune.

Right now they only have one outstanding song, the magnetic TV tableau 'My Friends'. But if they can instil the same kind of character into any of the rest it'll be a transition that's well worth following.

Mark Ellen

The Damned
The Ruts

Birmingham

The Ruts are stamped indelibly with their place of origin and there's a lot we can learn from Southall.

Malcolm Owen occasionally shoves guitarist Paul Fox and bassist Vince Segs about the stage. With Dave Ruffy on drums, the four play with the kind of helpless fury that makes marvellous music. Instruments are precise, hard and honed. The sound is powerfully coherent, cutting clean to the bone.

I thought spitting was passe until I discovered Birmingham.

Both sides spray each other liberally with saliva. Owen's face flaps slackly between fierce contortions, then transmuted briefly by a smile. He forcefully flings back the odd beer-can.

It is not until they hear the guitar line thrown out off-centre from 'Babylon's Burning' that the crowd is fired with enthusiasm. The sublimely simple 'In A Rut' is dedicated to the audience.

Segs climbs into the balcony to emerge shirtless several minutes later. Owen appears in an ancient, grinning mask strumming a tiny plastic guitar which he smashes and hurls into the crowd: the effect is frightening and not at all funny.

Audience disorientation, a stab at physical communication or a foolhardy attempt to disguise their fervour in tawdry theatrics? Whatever it was I would have preferred The Ruts without it.

It would be unfair to judge them on a short set played as unsuitable support, but The Ruts have something rare and I hope they come to terms with their obvious commitment. Their whole sound is a savage indictment of the way we live.

Like it or not they are subversive. How could they be otherwise?

The Damned have dumped fury and plumped for entertainment.

Vanian is slender and darting and demented. Scabies is ugly and amiable and demented. Alasdair Ward is a solid anchor in the sea of chaos raging around him.

I now have very serious doubts about The Captain's sanity. Standing stage-front he lowers pink fur trousers, bares his bum and demands that the audience kiss it: no-one complies. He's a plain little figure minus beret and specs.

But the kids, still dressed in zips and rips and bondage, are already frenzied. When all the crazed pieces slot together, The Damned make music to go mad to: 'Second Time Around,' 'Looking At You,' 'I'm A Burglar,' 'Suicide,' 'Love Song,' 'Neat, Neat, Neat'; and I could never uproot 'New Rose' from my heart.

Because they are so visual The Damned get away with behaviour which would be totally unacceptable in any other group — and only just gets by even under the auspices of their name.

The set is completely unstructured and, contrary to their beliefs, The Damned are not a group who benefit from lack of discipline. Sensible's solos are irksome and even more embarrassing than his histrionics. The results of swopping instruments are disastrous, and when Scabies steps out from behind his drum-kit the whole fragile jig-saw falls to bits. It is only when they are playing properly that The Damned are an anarchic celebration of anti-everything.

The audience has to be encouraged to shout for more, and the group fake an attack on their equipment before leaving the stage.

They show scant respect for themselves, their instruments or unfortunately, their audience.

Lynn Hanna

A jumping Tea Set. Pic: Mick Young.

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Mr Memory and Laughing Lowe

Rockpile Lew Lewis Reformer

Manchester

For Lew Lewis the thankless task of warming up a half-empty and lifeless Free Trade Hall.

Given Lewis' ropey track record (early attention with the infant Eddie And The Hot Rods; down hill credibility ever since), his current guise as a quarter of Reformer seems singularly appropriate. As anyone who has wrapped himself around a Hofner would know, obtaining some semblance of a musical noise is not all that difficult; but as a way of going up the rock'n'roll ladder, it's a notoriously unsuccessful route.

Reformer start off gingerly, lurching through a series of undistinguished 12 bar tunes, the storyline of each completely indecipherable as Lewis' flat vocals are slotted in as an afterthought between solos. It's male music, Chicago R&B with no frills, played with a dogged persistence.

Ultimately Lewis' spirited harp attack and winsome stage antics convert me: 'Night Talk' is a move in the right direction, bass player Johnny Squirrel taking over vocal chores and allowing Lew to give his undivided attention at what he's good at, and the closing brace of 'High Temperature', 'Lucky 7', 'Rider', and 'Hey, Mr Bartender' really do summon up energies of the Bishops and Dr Feelgood at their prime.

But a large concert hall just isn't the place. Next time I see Reformer, I want to be in a small club with a drink in my hand.

The next time I catch Rockpile it can be anywhere; just make it soon.

Launching straight into 'Sweet Little Lisa', Rockpile's quality is immediate. It doesn't really matter that Dave Edmunds has little stage presence, that he's in occasional danger of losing his voice, and much of his own material seems inferior next to his covers. He's such a superbly tasteful guitarist that an apparently dreary prognosis is reversed instantly.

Quite apart from his encyclopaedic knowledge of rock'n'roll licks — Rockpile shift from Chuck Berry through country-rock to John Fogerty and back again imperceptibly — it's Edmunds continual chromatic shifts, and his juxtaposition of rhythm and lead roles that makes him such a joy to hear. There's not a 'Sabre Dance' excursion in sight either. Actual solos come abbreviated and seem all the more potent for it.

Far more so live than on record (where he's actually wearing his producer's hat), Dave Edmunds is the Master of The Big Beat.

Predictably Nick Lowe's material is the more immediate; chestnuts like 'So It Goes', 'Shake And Pop' and even the Brinsley's 'Fallin' In Love Again' are reworked, remodelled to slot in with the newer stuff. If Lowe is invaluable to Edmunds as genial front man and purveyor of instant tunes, Rockpile is surely the vehicle in which the real Nick Lowe stands up. The only thing that's missing is that old green suit.

Of the 17 songs in the set, 'Girls Talk' sounds like a hit, while past efforts like 'Deborah' and 'Here Comes The Weekend' with a quasi-rockabilly treatment are made to sound like they should have been.

But number-by-number analysis is pointless. By the encores 'Down, Down, Down' and 'Let's Talk (About Love)' I was picking myself off the ceiling.

This was a set of all highs, no lows; a purist's rock'n'roll which takes no stylistic leaps into the future. But as a summary of the past 20 years or so, it would be difficult to equal.

The only thing wrong was the billing.

Quite apart from Billy Bremner, whose rhythm playing was relentless and who frequently filled a lead guitar and vocal role, Terry Williams is surely a drummer's drummer, providing all the upward thrust that's needed but never intruding.

So while both Radar and Swan Song have product to push, selecting two players out of four for lead billing is not only unnecessary but totally misleading.

Rockpile is a group.

I hope they'll be with us for a long time.

Ian Wood

John Cooper Clarke Fashion

Edinburgh

It took me nearly two years after leaving school to purge the tainted memories associated with books and grey trousers. I'll probably never be able to read poetry.

Despite that, I've enjoyed an occasional poetry reading, though usually more for the jokes than any patience with musing over the trivial, multi-layered significances of tiresome poetic devices. Better than that though are records of poetry read to music by the author.

Recommended are Roger McGough, Sir John Betjeman even, Linton Kweis Johnson of course and John Cooper Clarke especially.

Cooper Clarke is best because he's funniest, but he can be apppreciated from various perspectives.

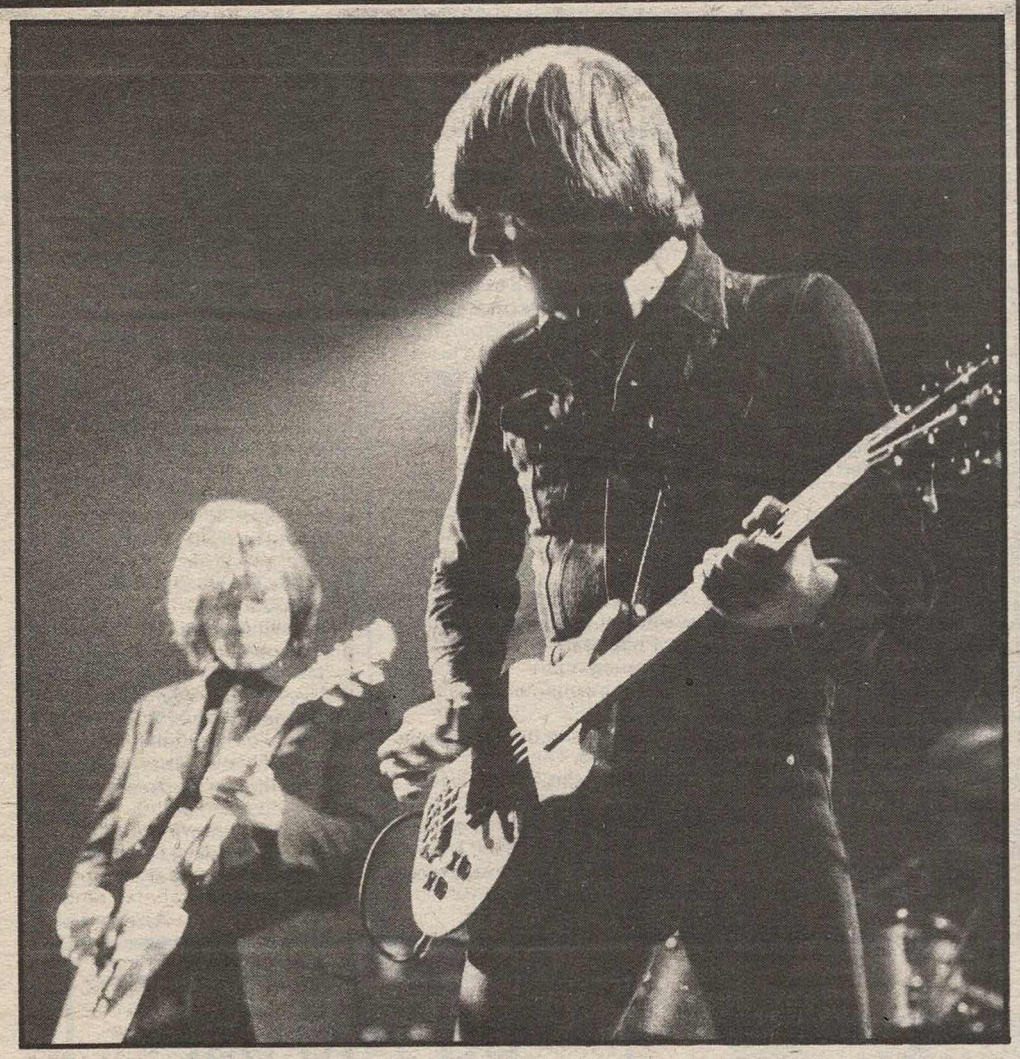
On this present tour he appears solo, backed only by the sound of wah-wah chewing-gum and occasional oral percussion. Tap your foot to that distinctly rhythmic Mancunian drone (just played the new Albumette 'Walking Back To Happiness' at 45 by mistake and he sounds *exactly* like Jimmy Clitheroe); thrill to the masterly manipulation of metaphor, alliteration, hyperbole, AAAA rhyme schemes, swearing and words in general; smile, laugh or cringe at the (naturally) ugly modern-media imagery crammed into every line.

Listening to JCC is like watching one of those high-speed railway/motorway films, especially as he gets faster with practice and develops an unnaturally strong tongue.

Worst thing about the evening is that before leaving I played all the records over and over and, amidst the Hawaiian Disneyland jungle voodoo masks, nets, baskets, leaves and lights of Tiffany's, I seem to be the only one not grinning like a shrunken head or laughing aloud at 'Twat', a general favourite. A few others know the material well enough to chat along with treasured lines, but it'd be best just to stumble across him somewhere, completely unaware that such a thing existed.

Of the three new poems, specially terrific are 'Chicken Town' and 'Beasley Street'. He's still as good as ever; no great projects to summarise the century in an epic; no plans to present himself at the Albert Hall with Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gary Snyder, Gregory Corso or Allen

The new Clitheroe Clarke? Pic Tom Sheehan.



Edmunds and Lowe: the masters of big beat. Pic Nigel S. Hadley.

Ginsberg.

Right now is seems that only some disaster, equivalent to religious conversion or going disco, could distort J.C Clarke's judgement.

He's an important man. Hope he can stay creative and still earn enough, maybe a part-time job as Burt Bacharach's lyricist? Well, there seems to be an interest in that area, judging by two album titles.

Birmingham band Fashion support throughout the tour. A trio, they're a collage of modern pop preoccupations; reggae/Lene Lovich/The Cure/M — a more abrasive Talking Heads. I like them, but can detect no aura of success. Too stark, the band are strange and gaunt, all three singing separately in similar mannered style.

There are too many bands for Fashion to be given much attention. But it's still right that they're making records.

Glenn Gibson

Clint Eastwood

100 Club

Right about now Clint Eastwood is fast becoming one of the sharpest-talking exponents of that much-maligned reggae genre, The Talkover. It's a remarkable achievement considering the lad still isn't 20.

Indeed, if a full-scale Battle Of The Banter should be arranged tomorrow, my money would be on Eastwood coming out top. On his current live form, the youngster is certainly moving out of the shadow of his elder brother, Trinity.

He proved as much with this vibrant, quicksilver 100 Club spot. Given the intimate audience contact of the best club gig in town, he surpassed even the considerable impact of his London debut at the Rainbow last autumn. Then he had been supporting Dillinger.

This time it was his own show; the culmination of a brief British tour which — unfortunately for the white audiences — took in mostly black clubs.

One of Eastwood's biggest trumps is his fine singing voice, uncommonly good for a DJ artist. Thus, he opened his account with a well-sung 'Drifter' before falling into his 'Roots Rock Reggae'' toast of the Dennis Brown song.

Galivanting about the stage in short, crimped locks and supercool lemon-tinted shades, he then proceeded to bark, yelp, wheeze and hiccup his way through 'Kingston Pretty', Culture's 'Send Some Rain', 'Deejay Jamboree', 'Country Boy', 'Premo Ballerina' and The Bold One's 'Dry Up Your Tears'.

Joined on extra vocals by 'Dago' of British reggae band Sons Of Jah, he generally managed to transcend the strictly limited Barbers, Baldheads and Babylon vocabulary of too many of his contemporaries. He provided an entertaining if never truly uplifting spectacle.

The unobtrusive excellence of four-piece Harlesden band The Freedom Fighters — who were backing Eastwood — is also worth mentioning. Watch out for their forthcoming debut album.

And remember: Clint Eastwood is the electric toaster who cooks the parts that other DJs cannot reach.

Adrian Thrills

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Purple Hearts

Hope and Anchor

The concensus among some of the hard-core London Mods is that Romford's Purple Hearts are no more than a bunch of Punks in Mod clothing and so unworthy of your attention. An 'ignore - them - and - hope - they - go - away' sort of thing.

Forget it.

No matter how they are tarred, the Hearts have both the talent and the energy to transcend the tags. One of their biggest trump cards is that they consistently refuse to conform to any of the stereotyped expectations of The Mod Band: they don't wear suits and spats and play Rickenbackers; nor do they play too many obvious cover versions.

But they're already walking around as if they're front page news!

Their brand of catchy, vigorous dance music is infused with a good-natured cocky Cockney arrogance, much of which stems from restive, chirpy vocalist Rob Manton — who stands some comparison to The Undertones' Feargal Sharkey.

Pic David Corio

Purple Hearts For Between Meals

Next to Manton stands angelic-faced guitarist Simon Stebbing. His simple, hauntingly melodic chord patterns and impeccable sense of timing and dynamics give the songs a framework under which the spadework of drummer Gary Sparks and bassist Geoff provide solid anchor.

Their live set — a couple of well-chosen esoteric covers aside — is weighted firmly in favour of the originals.

'Millions Like Us', already earmarked as the first single, fits the terrace-anthem bill perfectly, although it's the more introspective songs like 'Frustration' and 'Jimmy' that really catch the ear. But Manton has still to acquire the vocal character and expression to give them the impact they fully deserve.

And the lyrics, far from being throwaway lines, suggest that the band could soon be capable of something rather special. Take 'Frustration' — *'I get frustration / I wear it like a suit / But the jacket fits too tightly / And there's lead inside my boots.'*

They cover the armchair Bowie obscurity, a bouncy 'Can't Help Thinking 'Bout Me', but the best non-original is undoubtedly wicked Pickett's hot-headed ballad 'If You Need Me'.

These boys have soul as well as sparkle.

They encore, somewhat complacently, with a couple of standards: 'Steppin' Stone' and 'Whatcha Gonna Do 'Bout It', taking both songs from the point where The Sex Pistols, rather than The Monkees and The Small Faces, left off.

Despite some awful sound problems on the night, they left no doubt in my mind that they are happening Right Here and Right Now.

As Gary Sparks would say, "The Purple Hearts are the gap between lunch and dinner!"

Now, there's some food for thought.

Adrian Thrills

Distributors Oxy And The Morons

Moonlight

I was expecting a bunch of poets to saunter on stage and lull me to sleep. Despite their punny name, Oxy and his crew aren't like that at ball.

They kicked off with a unique commodity, a song inspired by an Italian gentleman whose marksmanship was the cause of much premature balding amongst Englishmen. Of course, Luigi Riva! 'Riva' is a ditty which might finally drive Luigi to hang up his boots, but its use of vague latin rhythms and haphazard structure is an intriguing mix.

The Morons' set often threatened to collapse but was somehow held together by a thread. The illogical product of this minor chaos was tantalising and sometimes mesmeric. They weren't drowning but waving. Too frequently the band wallowed in tedious white-noise which highlighted the lack of authority and sensitivity in Rene Dustcart's vocals.

Oxy And The Morons are desperately loose, their music drastic with no focus but you can't help smiling at them. They're also talented; and that *is* an asset.

The Distributors have it all worked out. Their music is regulated, measured and painstakingly recreated onstage, and the crafty and functional instrumentation dovetails together immaculately.

But the sound problems troubled the band. A disaster area had been created because their music is a barren landscape of melodrama linked, not by anything as dynamic as counterpoints, but by clinically disgusted nodes of interaction.

'Horses Among Fishes' — a grotesque and daft juxtaposition — duly sounded watery although guitarist Keith Jones' use of the volume was exemplary.

The problem is that this lack of song impact invokes a curt 'why bother'?

The Distributors are a backward revolt out of style, which is ultimately shallow and ephemeral.

Pete Archer.

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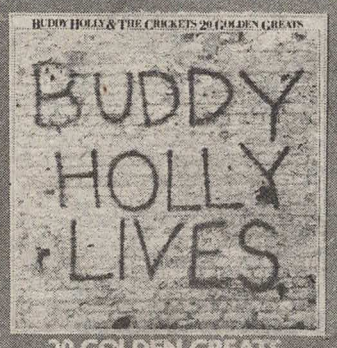

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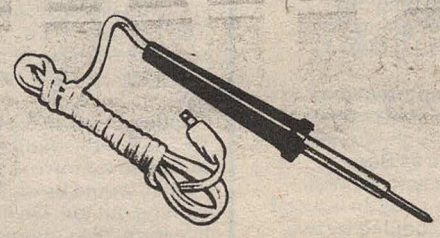

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Human League

Liverpool

There's nothing like one of these Moderne Muzik gigs for bringing the technological Bert Weedons and the Ice Machine chiksters out of their computer banks. Mention the Poolswinners Stylophone, name-drop a drum-machine here and there and you're guaranteed an audience that looks like an electricians convention.

Tubeway Army and the rest of these Diamond Dog Devo Dumbos are nothing more than the Bash Street Kids in overalls and eyeliner, while bathchair bleepblipburp boffins like Eno and Jean-Jacques Urinoman should get together and save up for an airport and turn it into a disco.

Human League are more bearable than most of the White Man In The North Pole clowns, they look like Ultravox with stubble. However, their truly squeaky clean sound and home movies point towards pomposity rather than pisstake; and the assembled cheesecloth 'n' flares/arched eyebrows 'n' "Ziggy digs 'em, y'know" gathering love them for it.

This band has a sense of style and presence that makes The Undertones look like the Bromley Contingent. Chas and Dave have got competition.

This was the only gig in this city tonight, and Eric's was like a sauna. 'Circus Of Death' and 'Being Boiled' had the androids swaying on their castors and the students grooving. These people in check shirts and pumps *really do* think they're on the bloody Mothership, y'know.

I liked their stripped-down cover version of 'You've Lost That Loving Feeling' and 'Rock 'N' Roll Part One/Nightclubbing' when I heard them in a cavernous rockathedral. But their echoey, booming irreverence is lost in this cosy, pie-and-a-pint sweatshop. The entire set was leaden and numb, partly due to the singer's throat problem.

Apart from his Swish curtain-rail hairstyle, Phil Oakley is the image of John "a laugh a minute" McBanshee, another minstrel who thinks (like the rest of these iceberg Cybores) that it's only the gullible, non-sussing duffers in the audience that are going to be dominated by cuddly Big Bro in four and a half years time.

If you pick a chord, go twang, you've got music — *not* exemption from the Apocalypse.

The Human League are not an electronic Ramones and never will be; but they're more real than the Tubevox Japan neo-hippie Break-Wind-Not-New-Ground circus that's trundling into clubs and record collections right now. Klaus Wunderlich

Phil Oakley. Pic Kevin Cummins.

Future fashions in a pie 'n' sweat shop

will be proud of them. They'll release their album and then there'll be a flux of soaring, synthetic knob-twiddlers all excreting at once.

This is really the 1975 Pub Rock/Be-Bop Deluxe wilderness all over again, except it looks futuristic and totally fashionable.

Can I be the first to say: stuff your Moogs and mascara?

Kevin Fitzgerald

Patrik Fitzgerald

Moonlight

The Moonlight Club's austere, alienating hall is the perfect backdrop for similar qualities in Patrik Fitzgerald's musical dialect as illustrated on his LP, 'Grubby Stories'. The architects must have designed the place as a statement against . . . well, something.

That first album was antagonistically inconclusive. While falling off a cliff it simultaneously flicked a V-sign at those laughing at the top and was of great interest and perhaps, ultimately, importance.

There's the memory of the Anti-Nazi festival two years ago when he went onstage looking as if he was going to sell peanuts, and was pelted off by the hairless faction. To even contemplate performing what was in fact the most radical material of the day was either an action of meticulous madness or great courage. For here, amongst a surfeit of political and stylistic rhetoric, was a performer who actually did make people shift and feel uneasy about this . . . again, *something*.

And now, after the blurb, Fitzgerald LIVE at the Moonlight!

No longer the lonely, vulnerable figure, he's now flanked by his new backing band of Charlie Francis on bass, Rab Fae-Beith on drums and guitarist Colin Peacock. Past fragility has evaporated and in its place stands a cultured confidence which is drawn from the layered, multi-faceted ingenuity of the musicians — Francis' bobbing bass regulating Peacock's subterranean, painstaking and finely-wrought guitar directions. No pedestrians here.

The result is that Fitzgerald smiles a lot and even jokes with the audience; an impossibility a year ago. And there are no acoustic pieces tonight either.

Only one number, the harrowing 'Suicidal Wreck', is lifted from 'Grubby Stories'. But this isn't a set of pale, not completely realised songs. 'Waiting For The Final Cue' is essential modern music, brimming with conviction. 'Backstreet Boys' from the 'Paranoid Ward' EP demonstrates the dominant, dark side of Fitzgerald and casts a doomy eye over everyday social repression. Who else is doing that these days with such tenacity?

The comically self-effacing 'Improve Myself' is the forthcoming single and its compact commerciality could even shove it chartwards. Fitzgerald shows with consummate ease that he already has strength in diversity.

As with Ian Dury, the Fitzgerald Band's best music is colossally understated. The 'one - man - taking - on - the - world' stance has gone, and Fitzgerald's fierce social observations have been orchestrated and consequently inadvertently dissipated by the desire to adopt a wider musical canvas. Although easier to swallow, the message has remained the same; except that he should not now be accused of being embittered.

He stands stage-centre, trilby on his bonce like a tea-cosy, and frightens, amuses and uplifts. His voice is a sharp, clear barrage of morse. He used to take you to the edge but nowadays he takes you there and back again.

Confucius might have said that he was a visionary muttering something along the lines of the relentless tide of the vistionary being seldom swayed.

But Confucius did go on a bit.

Pete Archer

Max Webster

Marquee

Anyone familiar with Max Webster's albums will at first find the heavy metal tag slapped on them absurd. Unfortunately there's more to it than their recent tour with Rush.

On record, solos are restricted in favour of imaginative interplay and shading. Unfortunately, Kim Mitchell's idea of live spontaneity is to demonstrate an ability to play Hendrix-derived guitar as badly as anyone, distorting or burying the skilful arrangements.

The hypnotic, blissed-out 'Sun Voices' becomes a feedback blitz. One long, fractured but largely successful number also finally succumbs; a 1979 acid-rock casualty.

Dave Myles (bass) and Gary McCracken (drums) may look like honest trundlers, but they don't play that way. Terry Watkinson (keyboards) turns 'Charmonium' into a workout reminiscent of Colosseum or The Nice in their yeastiest days, sings well and chips in with some subtle synth.

Mitchell clearly relished Pye Dubois' dippy lyrics, reciting them by way of introductions and adding a visual parallel by donning a vast, absurd red hat that would get a Duchess barred from the Royal Enclosure.

I enjoyed it despite the overkill, but were I a first-time punter I doubt I'd be scurrying off in search of Webster vinyl. Against that, restraint probably wouldn't have seduced the studded denim set from the Rush tour.

More cash in a thrash, you might say.

Harry George

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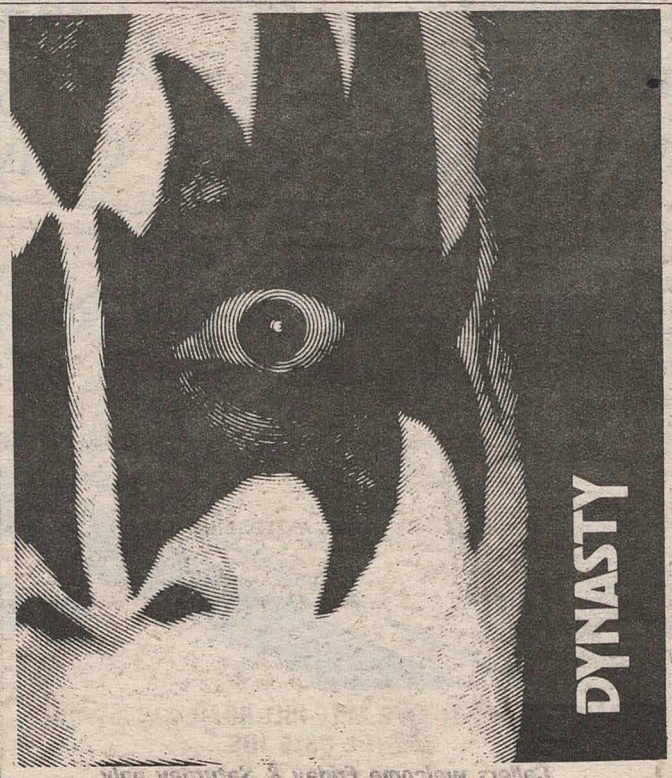

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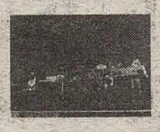
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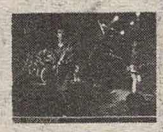
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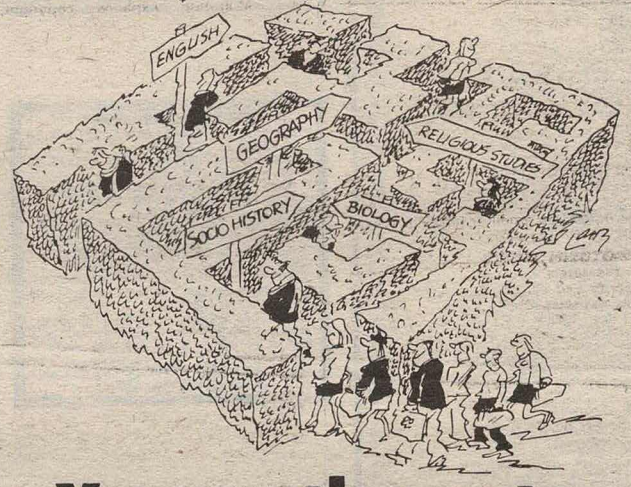

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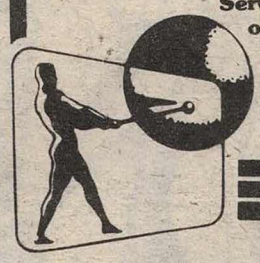

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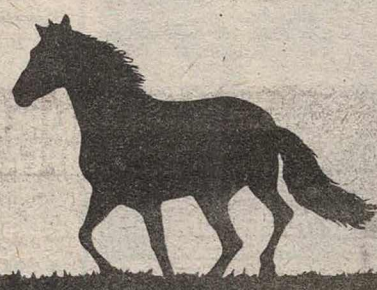

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GASBAG

I should like, via your influential journal, to complain about the lack of foresight shown by local newsagents. On many Thursday mornings I have set out from my mud hut, hacked my way through yards and yards of inpenetrable jungle, with the sun blazing inexorably down on to my weary back. Flies and mosquitoes buzzing maddeningly close to my face, giant leeches stuck to my buttocks. I have arrived at the shop a withered shadow of my former self only to find — no bleedin' *NME*s!

How much longer can this be allowed to continue? If everyone decided not to buy *NME* next week in protest, I bet you wouldn't sell any copies.
N. Forbes, Harrogate, N. Yorks.
He may have a point. — AN ACCOUNTANT

Can I be the first to complain about the 25p NME?
Mick, Hayes, Middx
Cheeky bastard. — THE SAME ACCOUNTANT

Worrabout this then, eh? Eh? The first bleedin' *Bag* letter ever to be printed in coloured ink! Ha! Ha! Eat your hearts out trend-setters — another first for the Gosport Sick-covered Lamposts.
The Gosport Sick-covered Lamposts.
Sorry, lads, but due to a technical hitch the only colours we could get this week were black and white. — MS.

Nick Kent might be a "complete wanker" and Ian Penman "the most short-sighted, misinformed, conceited bastard ever to put pen to paper", but at least *NME* has got Paul Morley who has just proved himself to be the only brilliant journalist on your paper.

Of course I refer to the Ian Dury interview. Paul Morley is to be admired for saying, "In my room I sob myself to sleep" etc. He didn't fall into the trap of pretending he was dead hard, like too many music mag writers do, just so they don't get branded as effeminate puffs by narrow-minded bastards who also pretend to be hard. Morley brought out Ian Dury's character from a personal level, and it worked.

What a contrast between this fantastic interview and the drivel John Hamblett wrote about Wayne County and the Electric Chairs. Somehow I forced myself to read on and at the end I began to wonder what the bloody point of it all was. John Hamblett seemed far more concerned with the room, wallpaper, etc., than the band. But it's hardly surprising is it? Most bands seem to have a lot to say to the music press (granted, this includes an enormous amount of shit) but what the hell did Wayne County and friends have to say?

Was John Hamblett as bored as me?
Boo (assisted by the ever-terrible Heff), Cleveland.
It would appear so. — M.S.

Patti Smith lodges a complaint about an ambiguous letter above.

Many thanks for a superb interview with Ian Dury. But surely a little more could have been said about the Blockheads — after all there would be no I.D. without the Blocks, would there?
Ingrid Blockhead (no relation)
Bit of a chicken and the egg situation as regards to this one. — COL. SANDERS

Can't you afford to print acute accents for the 20p I paid a couple of weeks ago?

I am referring to page 38 of the issue dated June 9, where you put 'Communique' instead of 'Communique'. But I'll let you off 'cos I don't think much of Dire Straits anyway.
Bosis.
Mercy buckets. — CHARLIE DE GAULLE

Bowie gets a slamming every election year and there must be something in that. Judging by the review of 'Girls Talk', Dave Edmunds, Nick Lowe and Elvis Costello are in for it this year, too. And God help Zeppelin after Knebworth. This ain't rock journalism — it's genocide.
Andrew Bassett, Cumbria
Bang, you're dead — JOHN WAYNE

Is there someone who can tell me why Joe Jackson shines his lower lip?
Confused in Toronto
Joe's shine is the effect of what we call an ongoing dribbling situation. — A DOCTOR

Dear Led Zeppelin, could you please arrange for some piss pots nearer to the front of the stage. Thanks.
David Turnbull and the Weak-bladdered Boys from Bramhall

I was born in 1975. Could you tell me who Led Zeppelin are please?
Steve Spew, London
No. — PETER GRANT

Latest pop news from the classics: Shakespeare's advice to amorous punks — "Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death, whipping and hanging." *(Measure For Measure* v.I. 525)
Anna Bolic
"Sea Hunt" — D. H. LAWRENCE

After all, as J.C.'s buddy Brutus said: "Who is so vile that they like heavy metal? For him I have offended." What I mean is, if Rush want to write a song about two trees talking to each other in a forest who am I to mock? After all such a conversation could probably change the face of civilisation as we know it (note the underlying current of HS — heavy sarcasm).
Mancunian Paul Morley Fan (we all have our problems)
Bah! — BACH

Can you please put back the Mod backlash until after my birthday on August 9 as my mum and dad are buying me a new Parka. Thanks.
Ken, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Thanks for printing Tony Ratcliffe's letter on CSM's article about the New Barbarians. I think it's a great pity there's such a conflict between the youngsters and the boys with whom time is rapidly catching up.

I'm only 19 and love The Ramones and the Stones somin' special. I would like to take this opportunity to slag off Atlantic Records for releasing 'Time Waits For No-One' as if offering an explanation for the Stones lack of inspiration. Now I would like to thank the people of the 1976 New Wave-Punk musical revolution (the Kids are alright) not only for giving bands like the Stones some competition (hence great albums like 'Some Girls' and 'Lodger') but also for offering me a whole new dimension of music. To those people who say the new wave is dead I say, "Think again, fools".
Mike, Swansea.
Gee, I thought it was dead. — A FOOL.
Me too. — ANOTHER FOOL.
Can I buy you fools a drink? — STEVE STILLS.

Lennon believes in magic again! Mention of the Good Book presumably means that he believes in The Bible, too! (Or perhaps I Ching or the learned outpourings of Gita, Buddha etc.)

What, we ask ourselves with bated breath, is the next thing he'll choose to believe in? Please don't make it Hitler, John.
The Nowhere Man.
I believe in Greenwood. And Brooking, too. — JOHN LENNON.

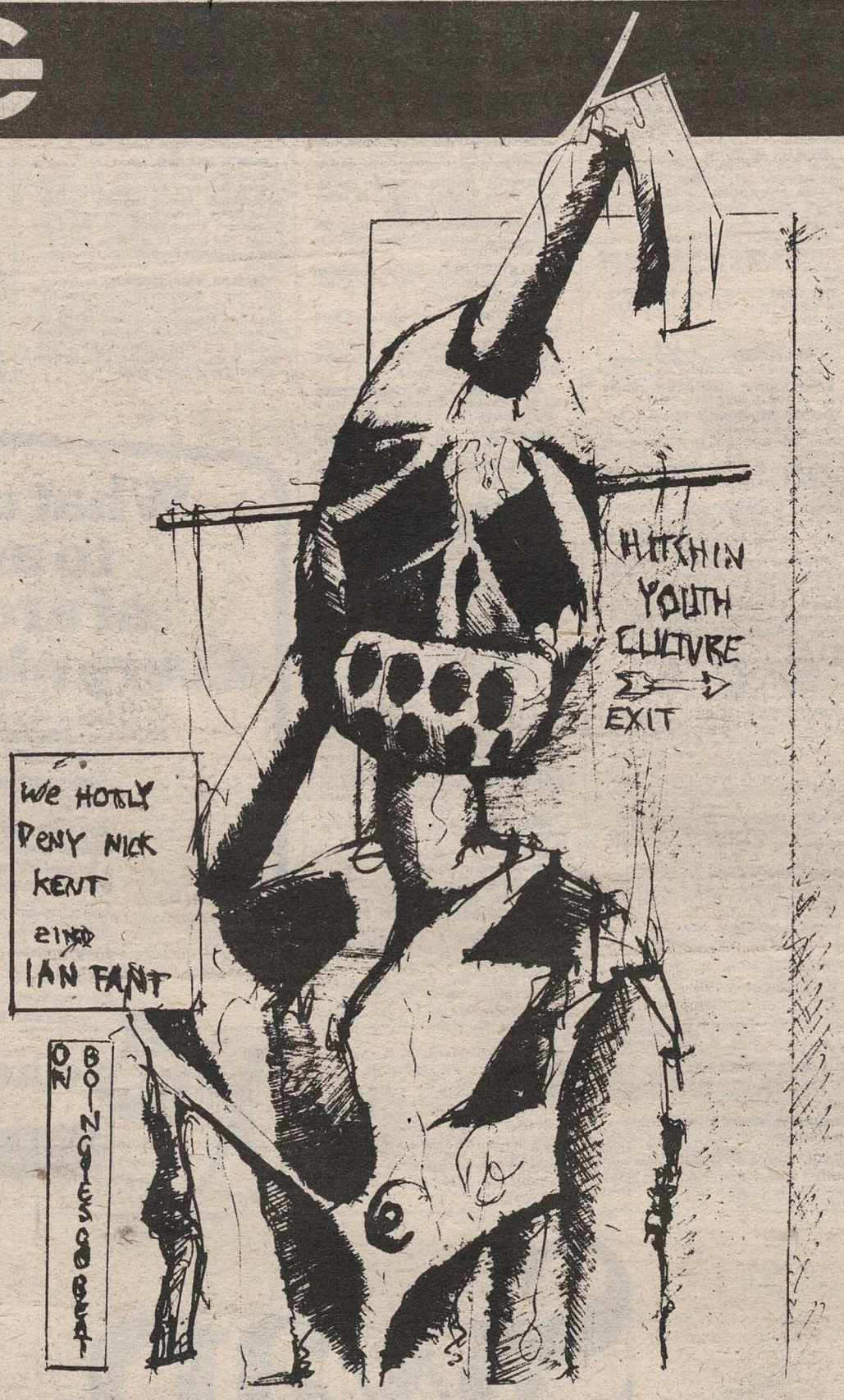
So CSM feels that the new Who album won't mean as much to us as it will to him does he? I think he has seriously underestimated the feelings that *all* supporters have for the band. He must surely be aware that we all have our favourite tracks and memories of The Who for our own individual reasons.

However I do agree with CSM's observations about a difference between him and the rest of us, and feel that it's obviously one he needs reminding of. Unlike the rest of us, CSM is a writer for a music paper, this allows special privileges: the opportunity for him to form closer relationships with bands, the opportunity of seeing the band more frequently than the rest of us and he will also receive the majority of his albums free.

I do not resent CSM gaining this position, but feel he should be more aware of it and remember the rest of us who have followed the band with exactly the same dedication as he has.
Steve Murray, Cannock, Staffs.
I'm going on holiday. — CSM.
He has as well. — M.S.

Is it OK for me to play 'Back In The USSR' with the plane landing at the beginning, or should it be grounded until further notice?
Worried Civil Servant, Exeter.
Definitely. And about time, too. — MIKE LOVE.
'Ey, lad, let's not be too 'asty. — FRED LAKER ESQ.

Did you realise that by Einstein's theories Dib Dob (of June 9) — by giving us a speed of 780,000,000,000 miles/s — gave us a mass of negative infinity × j and a volûme of plus infinity × j? In other words, with one quick stroke of his pen he's transferred us all into anti-matter in another dimension and blasted us all over everywhere. Good eh?
I. N. Stein (no relation to Frank).
OK. But where's Cecil B. DeMille when we need him most? — M.S.



The famous Ian Fant is now refusing to eat anything except liquid beef and cat food until there's an apology. Pic courtesy of the Ian Fant Appreciation Society.

We have just read the Kleenex review and would like to say to Emma Ruth: 'Eff off'. She speaks of this gig like it was meant to have happened two years ago. This is not a crime and we're pissed off with everyone going on as if it were. Also, she says the punks are dumb — perhaps we ought to go back to school again for her ladyship.

Punks are still the same, still like the same music and believe it or not some of the lucky sods still have pink hair. We're still bored, still getting pissed and still wearing bondage trousers — and we aren't ashamed of it!
Sheila and Rock, two punkettes from Bucks.
Nor should you be. — A PSYCHIATRIST.

I've just got back from the Lloyd George Memorial Hall, Pontrhydfendigaid, mid-Glamorgan, Wales after seeing the best Moody Blues concert for 12 decades. I hope to see an excellent review of the concert in your paper.
Glenn, Sunderland.
Emma Ruth writes: Amidst mellifluous mellotron melodramatics the magnificent Moodies (cont. p537 of Roget's Thesaurus).

Cyrus lives!
Swan, Coney Island, N.Y., U.S.A.
Great. I get to make a sequel. — WALTER HILL.

I'm sure nobody's particularly interested but after reading your interview with Debbie Harry in issue dated May 5 (I know I'm a little late!) I just felt I had to reassure people that plucking one's legs definitely does not hurt, although Ms Harry claims she enjoys the pain.

Of course, my naturally blonde growth is probably a lot finer than Debbie's darker and stronger leggy locks, so that may have something to do with it.
In case you're wondering, I'm female!
A Natural Blonde, Liverpool.
Don't listen to her sisters! Why shouldn't we let our leg hair grow as bushy as Elliott Gould's? — A STUNNINGLY ATTRACTIVE FEMINIST.
Right on! — PATTI SMITH.

Another week passes — another 30 records are released portraying attractive, often seductive females on the sleeve. Another pathetic outcry emits from the HQ of Rock Against Sexism.

It may come as a complete surprise to RAS, but the purpose of record covers is not simply one of protection of vinyl circles anymore — gone are the days when plain white covers gave satisfaction. Today, in 1979, there are so many new-releases that the process of seek and thee shall find is only aided by the presence of covers with interesting titles, known artists or appealing pictures on.

In this final category, again probably to RAS's amazement, I and countless others would no doubt prefer covers with pictures of attractive females on (i.e. not Patti Smith).

Shouldn't RAS be renamed Rock Against Pleasure? Furthermore, contrary to what RAS would have us believe, sexism is enjoyed by both parties. Obviously menfolk derive pleasure from it, but also it must be understood that females achieve deep gratification at noting our pleasure. Why is it, RAS, that women wear make-up, go to hairdressers, adorn jewellery and perfume, spend lavish sums of money on clothing, if not to be appreciated by men? Do RAS want our country's females to become like Russian peasants? Wouldn't that be Utopia!

Be proud of your beauty ladies! Long live sexism.
Eric Shun, "No Justice", Cheltenham.
Who is this dick? — VANESSA REDGRAVE.

Ugly? Spotty? Awkward? Hopelessly square? No noticeable physique? Hair with a life of its own? Shy with girls?

Me too. Rotten, isn't it?
Dick Piles, Catford.
It surely is. — HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Geoff Boycott for Pope.
Capt. Jack, Hampshire
Bugger, cricket's back. — HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL GEORGE ETC

. . . And on top of all this Hazell didn't score on Thursday night.
Stan, Builth Wells.

*Lodge **your** complaints to M. Smith, G. Bag, NME, 5/7 Carnaby Street, London W1.*

T-ZERS GOES ON STRIKE

There's no doubt that he's blown it. Apparently the set was OK but the U.S. couldn't cope with his ideas and method, even though the last album created a lot of interest down in the Village area. It looks like **Dire Straits** and **The Police** are to be the only ones capable of getting a foothold in the monopoly, although *T-Zers* would prefer to hear the full story from the man himself and, rest assured, we will nab him the instant the ellusive one steps foot back home. **Nick Kent'll** get the poop, after all didn't they share rooms for a while? Anyway, we here believe that the Beeb would go down on bended knees to have him back on *The Generation Game* . . .

Or maybe he could be guaranteed a slot on Radio **Dire Straits!** Well, hardly — seeing as how the rumours surrounding this venture are all pith and wind. Tell us the old, old story about a tired and emotional band member — in this case **John Illsey** — letting the beer tame his tongue when journalists are within eighty miles. Seems Illsey had merely sighed upon the prospect of combating this Isle's ailing airwaves and it had been quoted as gospel. Says Straits manager **Ed Bicknell**: "We couldn't even get the GPO licence even if we wanted to and we're certainly not buying an old boat and floating it off the coast of Holland!"

But all that dough, Dire Straits? "We've talked about building our own recording studio for bands to do demo tapes in 'cos London's short of a good demo studio with reasonable prices . . ."

Fact: Less than one year ago a free day-long gig in Deptford featured **ATV, Fabulous Poodle, Squeeze** and **Dire Straits!** The same bill today would require a fee in the region of ooh, let's say over a tenner . . .

Ignore the constant cry of 'wolf', we have it exceedingly firmly that **Rich Kids** have positively broken up. Absolutely. Fact. Finished. Tonight you shall sleep well . . .

Unless woken by the tug-like wailings for **Poly Styrene,** currently ensconsed in the studio recording a *solo* LP. All sources are quick to point out that this isn't by any means the bowing out of **X-Ray Spex** . . .

Everybody's chum **Chuck Berry** charged by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service with three different counts of tax evasion that carry a possible $20,000 fine and eleven years in clink. The charges were made just prior to the duckwalker, 53, performing at the White House fo **Jimmy** and **Rosalyn Carter.** What a mug-up eh. Pop? . . .

No such slackness for one as swish as **Bob Geldof,** the noted TV person. Must be that ol' gums is the media's favourite tame punk seeing as not only did he gush through a lengthy interview with Mavis Nicholson on ITV but switched channels later in the week to quipalonga **Isla St. Clair** of *Generation Game* fame, of **Bruce Forsyth** reknown ...

The **Leighton Buzzards** have been approached to play an Anti-Nazi League gig. What sets this one apart is that it will be a show in Berlin . . .

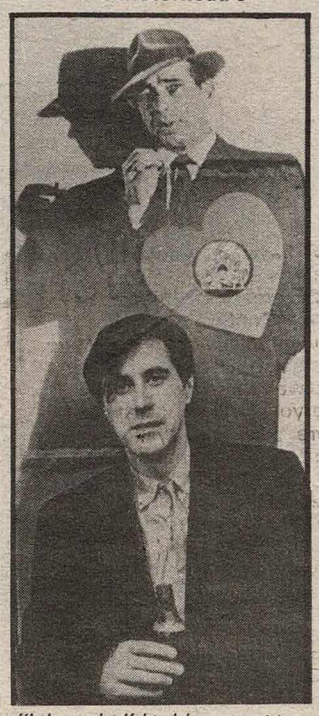
That lurking five-stone spectre of the third floor **Paul Morley** was a tad too harsh on the price of **John Shearlaw's Status Quo** biography he reviewed in his vegetarian way last week. Turns out that the nine pound ticket is on the hardback editions whilst the soft variety weigh in at a mere £5.25. Oh, just three please . . .

Some names jest git people crazy. **Thieves Like Us** drummer **Paul Bringloe** was the victim of an apparently motiveless attack last Wednesday night in his home town of Winchester. Thumbing his bleeding nose at the fates, our man — aided with medical wiring to hold together a shattered jaw — is declaring himself fit to be there on June 14 when the band started their UK tour . . .

Also currently in Emergency Ward 10 is **Motorhead's**

SPARE A THOUGHT for the girls in the backroom — in this case the waitresses at New York's show-casing venue The Bottom Line. The girls in our pic are engaged in industrial action (i.e. they're on strike) over what they consider to be unfair treatment at the hands of their employers, Messrs Allen Pepper and Stanley Snadowsky.

The waitresses resigned en masse and distributed leaflets explaining why — meagre wages, demeaning surveillance for staff theft etc — just as the first of four 'sold out' Lou Reed concerts was about to start. Is this the Big Apple catching the English disease or what?
Pic: Allan Tannenbaum



"I thought I'd told you not to spoil my view shweetheart". Bryan Ferry pretends to pull on a Bud and whistle at the same time — HB feigns disinterest at Brian's first encounter with a bottle of, uh, 'beer'.
Pic: Michael Putland

Lemmy who dislocated a shoulder in Lyon during the group's French tour. It is claimed the inconvenience was incurred as the bass playing yeti attempted to cart a schoolgirl-like creature to his hotel room . . .

And more sliced meat with **The Ruts** vocalist **Malcolm Owen** splitting his head awide on a crash cymbal during their set at Exeter Routes Club. Fellas there are easier ways of seeing your name in darker print, surely . . .

Like damn hard work, what! Take that upstanding member of society **Linton 'Kwesi' Johnson** whose 'Forces Of Victory' LP is now enjoying its fourth week atop the reggae charts. Meantime, **Mick'n'Paul Clash** and **Modest Bob** 'Frosty' **Geldof** both spied at LKJ's Marquee gigs. While on these alien beat people, notice that West London's Nashville niterie now featuring reggae bills every Tuesday for Summer. Are you riveted, all you out there in Truro? . . .

Equals' front line spokesman Eddy Grant gets up for a corner during a Music Industry Football League soiree. Eddy's team Ice Records roundly defeated Pye Records, whoever they are, 5-2.

In spite of **Nina Hagen's** protestations that her love affair and forthcoming marriage to **Herman Brood** (see feature) is an open relationship free of jealousy, jug throwing, victory signs etc., a counselling *T-Zer* learns that when Nina heard that her fella had actually had his kippers in the grill elsewhere all the theory flew out the window. It took much in the way of flowers, new hats and sugar cupids from Herman to get the pair back into a position where wedding bells may be heard at the dawn of next month . . .

The hottest engagement would appear to involve whoever takes up the reigns of **Blondie's** management now that **Peter Leeds** has been deposed. **Malcolm McLaren** is bobbing and weaving in there and **Jake Riviera** is keen to get his oar in too. Betting latest: McLaren 7/4, Riviera 9/4, **Sammy Chung** 25/1.

And still entwined in Talcy Malcy's knee connectors, we are informed that even though Virgin hem and haw about the actual content of the proposed 'new' **Sex Pistols** album, it becomes clearer that the platter will contain solely spoken words, culled from

Quo go minimalist. Pic Kevin Cummins.

radio interviews at home and abroad . . .

Even yet we can't leave the managerial nest. Jake Riviera act **Elvis Costello** may have received over-publicity on his famed fisticuffs with **Bonnie Bramlett,** but much less is known about a rumoured previous punch up between his gang and a certain **Siouxsie and The Banshees** of these shores. Any phone tip offs will be treated in confidence and then yelled out of the window using a megaphone device . . .

And one for the ladies. Sexy, obese **Demis Roussos** (32) has finally admitted the secret of his undeniable appeal. According to the luscious Greek, "The girls are always wanting to see what's underneath my kaftan. They even ask me whether I wear anything underneath!" But life isn't just a bowl of cherries for saucy Dem. His doctor told a panel of nutritional teasers that Demis must shed ten of his massive twenty stone frame or face the consequences of his unassuaged greed in years to come . . .

. . . **Donna Summer** recently became the first woman singer to top both the singles and albums charts in USA, with 'Hot Stuff' and 'Bad Girls'; Donna meanwhile hasn't missed out on her nightly communion with the Almighty for thirteen years (it says here). Apparently, even avant garde jazz pianist **Cecil Taylor** digs the omnipotent Donna . . .

Talking of Donnas . . . **Fatal Microbe's** singer **Donna Boylan** (aka **Honey Bane**) visited these offices last week to check out her beautiful pictures. Later in the week Donna disappeared from her child care centre again . . .

You'll never believe this but profit returns on all major American record companies have plummetted in the first half of '79 with the result that both CBS and MCA are going to prune their rosta. Does this mean we'll be seeing **Bob Dylan** on Rough Trade? Hope not. Anyhow it seems that whereas 'Saturday Night Fever's' gross sales topped 27 million copies in '78, this year the biggest seller, **The Bee Gees** 'Spirits Having Flown' has only shifted a measly 4.5 million. I think there's a lesson there for all of us.

Unlikely co-revellers were to be sighted at the debut bash of the newly opened Wichity's disco/cafe type thing in glitzy Kensington High Street. Upstairs **Tony** 'I Left My Heart In San Francisco' **Bennett** supped quietly, while downstairs **John** 'Why did you send that bender to interview me' **Lydon** and members of the **PiL** camp (including the mythical **Steel** 'I am a reality' **Leg**) took in the disco, had altercations with photographers, and froliced gently. **Andy** 'He was wearing a vest!' **McKay** was also spotted hulking around. As it transpires, the gaff is owned by **Nora,** mother of **Ariadne Slit** and will inevitably become the heavy duty night spot/Chic watering hole/de rigeur fun palace (delete where applicable) . . .

Nice too see you — to see you . . ."

Not now **Bruce** . . .

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BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week		Last week
1	Rock Against Thatcher	(1)
2	The Ruts	(4)
3	Getaway — S.L.F.	(—)
4	All Mod Cons	(3)
5	Clash Police	(5)
6	The Undertones	(2)
7	Tube Station	(8)
8	S.L.F.	(7)
9	Gang Of Four	(10)
10	The Jam	(—)

New Releases: **20p Specials AKA, Rude Boys, Radio Activity, Computer Rock, Bye Bye Turpin, I'm An Upstart, Swell Maps, Edge Downhill, The Chords, The Mo-Dets, Shoes For Industry**
25p Rock Contra Le Travail, Spherical Objects, Mo-Dets

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